

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LOS ALAMOS

UPDATE

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos
P.O. Box 158, Los Alamos, NM 87544
<https://my.lwv.org/new-mexico/los-alamos>
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Calendar

May 7	Early voting begins in Council Chambers 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
May 9	Candidate Forum, Fuller Lodge 7-9 p.m., refreshments, 6:30 p.m.
May 16	Lunch with a Leader, Unitarian Church, County Clerk Naomi Maestas, noon
May 18	Early voting begins, White Rock Town Hall and Council Chambers 8 a.m.- 6 p.m
May 30	Board Meeting, Unitarian Church, noon
June 4	Primary Election Day 7 a.m.-7 p.m., See Voter Guide for locations

League of Women Voters Candidate Forum on May 9

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos will host a candidate forum on Thursday, May 9 at Fuller Lodge. The forum begins at 7 p.m., but all are invited to enjoy refreshments and socialize with the candidates at 6:30.

Participating in the forum are:

- Christine Chandler (Dem.) and Chris Luchini (Lib.) running for NM District 43;
- Mary Carmack-Altwhies (Dem.) and Marco Serna (Dem.) running for District Attorney in the First Judicial District;
- Beverly Neal-Clinton (Dem.), Denise Derkacs (Dem.), Ryn Herrmann (Dem.), James Wernicke (Lib.), and David Reagor (Rep.) running for County Council.

Members of the Los Alamos High School Hilltalkers will assist in running the forum.

Don't forget to consult the LWVLA Voter Guide, which was inserted in the *LA Daily Post* on Thursday, May 2. The guide is also available on the the LWVLA website, <https://my.lwv.org>¹. You may also find general voter information by entering your address on the Vote411 site (<https://www.vote411.org/ballot>).

¹ The full UL is https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/leagues/wysiwyg/%5Bcurrent-user%3Aog-user-node%3A1%3Atitle%5D/lwvla_2024_primary_vg_0.pdf.

May Lunch with a Leader: County Clerk Naomi Maestas

Lunch with a Leader will take place at the Unitarian Church on May 16 from noon to 1 p.m. The speaker will be our County Clerk, Naomi Maestas, who is currently serving her second and final term. She began her career in the Office of the County Clerk in 2005. Before that she served in positions with the Los Alamos National Laboratory as a Business Administrator and at Los Alamos Public Schools as a Business Services Specialist.

A native of New Mexico, Maestas and her husband have embraced Los Alamos as their home for the past two decades. They revel in their familial bonds, encompassing three children, two grandchildren, and their cherished pets. Armed with extensive experience and knowledge, she is committed to fostering transparency and accessibility in governmental affairs, diligently serving our community's needs.

With a staff of seven employees, Maestas oversees election administration, serves as the custodian of public records, acts as an ex-officio member of the County Council, fulfills duties as Clerk to the Probate Court, and manages various administrative functions vital to local government. She will speak about the upcoming election, election security and processes, recent legislative changes including the permanent absentee option, and her interest in Ranked-Choice Voting.



Naomi D. Maestas. Los Alamos County photo

Karyl Ann Armbruster

President's Message: A Key to New Mexico's Top Ranking for Election System Performance

Last month we noted that the Election Data and Science Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology had ranked New Mexico number one in the nation for election system performance in the 2022 mid-terms. This month the 2022 New Mexico Election Administration, Voter Security, and Election Reform Report was released, and it is clear that key to our top ranking was the sustained assessment of the election system by the University of New Mexico and the New Mexico Secretary of State's Office.

The 2022 Report is the ninth New Mexico Election Study (NMES) . The first was in 2006, followed by a postelection survey in every subsequent federal election . The authors are unaware of any other election jurisdiction subject to such detailed, sustained study. They attribute their ability to provide useful information about voter attitudes and experiences to support from many county clerks, the Secretary of State, a variety of voting organizations, feedback from voters and poll workers, and the responsiveness of local election administrators.

The 77-page Report is easy to read and fascinating. The questions asked in the survey are nonpartisan and set out verbatim in an appendix for reference. The results are shown in tables and color graphs, and relevant observations are part of the discussion in each section. Section 2 provides an overview of the 2022 general election, including voter registration, turnout and demographics; the redrawing of Congressional District maps following the 2021 Census; geography and political sorting between rural and urban counties in Northern and Southern New Mexico; candidate contributions and spending; and voting modes, including vote by mail.

Section 3 sets out the details of the voter experience with the election process and voter confidence, specifically with respect to returning absentee ballots; ballot tracking; early and election day voting wait times; interactions with poll workers; voter identification; and the privacy, safety and convenience of polling locations. The general picture is one of ease, accessibility, and convenience.

Section 4 explores voter beliefs about ballot privacy and the possibility of fraud or coercion. Some of the answers were based on personal experience, but not all. For example, the vast majority of voters have not witnessed voter fraud or illegal voting activities, but a substantial fraction believe it might still be happening. Among the potential activities examined, voters were most concerned about a non-U.S. citizen voting in the state. Although many answers to survey questions were not notably different based on demographics, this was one question that showed significant differences in the answers based on gender and party registration, and discernable differences based on level of education, age, and ethnicity. Section 4 also addresses voter attitudes toward possible election reforms such as moving to universal all-mail elections (not popular at all), extending voting rights to 16- and 17-year-olds (not popular), or ranked choice voting, which is currently used in Santa Fe and Las Cruces (some support, depending on party).

The Report contains much more information, including observations on opportunities to improve election administration and voter confidence. Approximately one-third of voters are unsure that their ballot is private. The authors suggest an educational campaign by the Secretary of State explaining that election officials and poll workers cannot trace a ballot to a particular voter, and why this is true. Expanded availability of "privacy sleeves" at polling locations may also increase voter confidence that ballots are private.

Election integrity and voter confidence in election administration are critical to our democracy. As the principal author notes, "New Mexico does elections well," and the League of Women Voters is proud to contribute to that success through voter registration and education, work at the polls, and advocacy in support of fair redistricting.

The full Report is available here: <https://polisci.unm.edu/people/faculty/profile/2022-nm-election-administration-report.pdf>.

Felicia Orth

Farewell, Paul Frederickson

Paul Frederickson passed away on November 13, 2023, surrounded by his wife of 65 years, Rosmarie, and his children Beth, Margie, Jim, and Howard. Paul was a long-time member of the Los Alamos League of Women Voters. He led the League's Election Reform Committee for several years and was involved in many community activities including the Utilities Board and the founding board of the Los Alamos Cooperative Market.

Comprehensive Health Plan Presented to County Council

As reported in the Observer Corps Report for March 26, the Interim Report and Draft Action Plan for Los Alamos County Comprehensive Health Plan (CHP), including preliminary recommendations, was presented to County Council by Jessica Strong (Social Services Division Manager) and Lori Padilla (County Health Council Chair). It was well-received by Council and public participants. It is based upon the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Social Determinants of Health: Health Care Access and Quality, Education Access and Quality, Economic Stability, Social and Community Context, and Neighborhoods and the Built Environment. A copy of the presentation and report can be found on the County website.

In recent budget review sessions, the Social Services Division received approval for two budget options that provide additional funding to their FY2025 Budget. These are for: 1) the position of Case Coordination Specialist trained in older adult-related issues (mental and physical health, substance use, Medicare, nutrition), and 2) \$100,000 for implementing some immediate CHP recommendations.

There will be a Grandparents and Kin Raising Grandchildren Resource Fair on Friday, May 10 from 1–4 pm at Northern New Mexico Community College in Española. There will be a Senior Health Fair sponsored by Los Alamos Retired and Senior Organization (LARSO) on Tuesday, May 14 from 10 am–1 pm at the Betty Ehart Senior Center. This will include health care providers, massage therapists, county businesses, non-profits, mini-workshops, food, and a drawing for prizes. It is free to the public.

Lisa Hampton

Fundraising Committee Is Hard at Work

The Fundraising Committee met on April 18 with Lisa Hampton, Felicia Orth, Karyl Ann Armbruster, Leslie Wallstrom, Tracy McFarland, and Ellen Mills present. We reviewed the results of the current fundraising efforts, discussed upcoming efforts, and reviewed roles and responsibilities of the committee members.

The committee has raised \$6,647 to date from Friends of the League, local Los Alamos businesses, and member donations. The main focus for April is the membership donation drive. There is also outreach to local larger businesses and contractors currently underway.

Of particular note, a request to the Delle Foundation for support of the Voter Guide costs is being made. Also, Enterprise Bank and Trust has provided a generous donation to the League.

The committee is diligently working to consistently track contacts and donations made from all donors. We also will be making requests for donations at Lunch with a Leader, Candidate Forums, and other community events scheduled in Los Alamos in the coming months.

Ellen Mills

Observer Corps Report – County Council – March 26, 2024

Comprehensive Health Care Plan

The regular session was attended by Chair Denise Derkacs, Vice Chair Theresa Cull, and Councilors Suzie Havemann, David Reagor, and Randall Ryti. Councilors Melanee Hand and Keith Lepsch were absent. Our observer report is based on discussion during the meeting and documentation provided in the full agenda package.

Update on the Comprehensive Health Plan for Los Alamos County

Jessica Strong, County Social Services Manager, summarized the key takeaways of the Interim Report on the County’s Comprehensive Health Plan for Los Alamos County. The goal of the Plan is to identify unmet health, wellness, and social service needs in the County and to develop an action plan to address those needs.

The County’s Plan is under development by Los Alamos County Health Council members and County Social Services Division staff.

Strong’s presentation highlighted major themes that emerged from focus groups and more than 200 interviews with community members. She focused on key identified needs and some short-term recommendations that the Health Council believes the County can start implementing now, without waiting for completion of the final Plan.

[An initial update on the Comprehensive Health Plan was presented to Council at its 09/19/23 Work Session . See the observer report in the October 2023 LWVLA *Update*.]

How does one evaluate community health and wellbeing?

The Interim Report describes how the Plan considers multiple facets of the environment that impact health and wellbeing of the community.

These facets include not only access to health care, but also less obvious contributors such as education access, economic stability, and neighborhoods.

“Health doesn’t exist in a vacuum,” said Strong. “If you have a stable job or you’re always scrambling to make ends meet, it impacts your health. If you have a healthcare facility located close to you or you have to travel several hours to receive routine care, it impacts your health.”

Community strengths in Los Alamos County

Before jumping into the main part of her presentation, Strong felt it was important to acknowledge the many key strengths in the Los Alamos community . She said that many people reported that “we have a small and safe community where members look out for each other. There are many opportunities to participate in free and family-friendly events throughout the year. There’s a strong sense of safety: it’s safe to walk, it’s safe to bike, it’s safe to be out in public. There’s the free public transportation, the free library system, and community arts. Residents are highly educated, and the public schools provide a robust education for the community. And despite our size and remote location, there is a wide range of medical and mental health resources that are available in the community.”

Nonetheless, said Strong, “Even as we are designated the healthiest county in the country and happiest small town, that doesn’t mean that is true for everyone in our community.” Strong then discussed areas needing improvement, along with short-term recommendations for how the County could begin to address them.

Health care access challenges

Strong said that community members report challenges accessing health care, whether it be physical health, mental health, or behavioral health services.

She noted that many of the identified problems are statewide, or even nationwide, and that they would be difficult—if not impossible—to solve locally. “We know there

is a lot of provider shortages. The pandemic has been hard on a lot of providers, a lot have retired or moved . We know some people may have other challenges. They may have health insurance, but their provider no longer takes that insurance or there are wait lists. So, there are definitely long-term [challenges].”

However, there are some short-term recommendations that the County could implement now, said Strong. These include updating existing mental health and substance use resources to help people find mental health providers in the community as well as to identify gaps or needs. The Interim Report also recommends that the County evaluate physical health care challenges and develop next steps for improving accessibility and solving insurance needs (including prescription accessibility).

Strong said that there are gaps in those services and programs specifically designed to assist older adults with healthy aging. “We have a high percentage of community members aged over 50 in our town, and the great majority want to remain here, they want to age healthily in place.”

To address this problem in the short term, the Interim Report recommends that the County fund a Case Coordination Specialist position to work with older adult clients and to serve as a single-point-of-contact . This person would work with clients needing help with housing and utilities, transportation, and food, as well with finding medical and behavioral health providers.

Just as in the case of senior health needs, there are also gaps in services and programs to support young adults’ mental health and substance use needs, said Strong. “An action that has a budget option is to expand the continuum of care, the programming and services offered by our contracted providers to address some of those gaps. For example, Intensive Outpatient Programs. What we have heard multiple times is when young people that come back from getting rehab or inpatient treatment, there’s a lack of post-treatment support available here.”

Education access and quality challenges

Strong said that parents and students report a number of challenges for students, including physical and psychological safety within school and the community, lack of mental health and other specialists available for youth, lack of acceptance of diverse youth in the community, and handicapped accessibility challenges at school and during school and community events.

Both students and parents want additional ways to address students’ social and emotional needs.

“I should note that there is a lot that the schools are already doing and doing quite well,” said Strong. The County’s role is to support what is already there, “the wide network of collaborators who are already working together to improve opportunities for the health and wellbeing of all youth in the community.”

Economic stability challenges

Low-income individuals struggle with the high cost of living in our community, said Strong. “I think this need is probably familiar.”

One action among several that the County could take is to increase its Social Services outreach. “When I tell people what I do, I always hear, ‘I had no idea the County did all of that,’” said Strong, “so having more outreach so that we can reach people who haven’t yet heard of our ability to help them get connected to SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] and WIC [Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children] and LA Cares to address their food insecurity or helping them figure out Medicaid, or how to get re-enrolled with health insurance.”

Social and community context challenges

Strong noted that many people report that they don’t know where to find timely and accurate health-related information. “A lot of it is word-of-mouth,” she said. “I think there’s an idea that we put it out on social media and that’s how people find it, but more and more

people aren't on Facebook, or certainly not on TikTok . So people reported, 'Oh, I just happened to see a flyer at the library, or just happened to read about it in the paper.'"

The report recommends several actionable items to address this challenge:

- Implement a Communications Plan to compile information from a variety of sources, and then ensure all media sources receive that information.
- Maintain a master list of existing local support groups that is distributed regularly.
- Increase outreach at events, resource fairs, and community locations to educate the community about what resources are available, in conjunction with community partners.
- Encourage youth participation in health-related groups.

Neighborhoods and the built environment challenges

The lack of affordable housing and transportation impact the health of many community members, said Strong. "These action items aren't necessarily short term. They tend to be more medium or long term, but we thought it was important to mention them."

"Our thesis is that all of these things are related," said Strong. Social Services and the County Health Council plan to collaborate with other county departments and boards and commissions to help shape affordable housing and transportation solutions. They will also participate in regional collaborations to help prioritize expansion and meet development and transportation needs.

Council questions and discussion

Most comments and discussion dealt with mental healthcare needs.

Councilor Reagor commented that he was pleased to see that the Interim Report included mental health care as one of the County needs. "I always viewed that as the number one problem that we have in the community and then substance abuse and things that spin off from that as well."

Councilor Havemann asked, "Were there any surprises based on the input you received from these 200 or so interviewees? And is there anything you thought was a need in our community but nobody vocalized it?"

Strong replied that, given the timing of the interviews, opioid problems in the County were not on people's minds for early interviews. "I think they weren't on people's radars, and yet we certainly know there was that spike that impacted us," she said. "So that was one that was really surprising that not many people mentioned."

Strong added that, in addition, "I was surprised by how many times transportation as a health barrier came up. ... I think we take it for granted that you either have a car or we have a free bus, so we're good. But, for example, we heard from a couple of people who are members of the Senior Center, [where] there's a robust volunteer program to help get them to medical appointments, but generally speaking—nationally and we're seeing it here too—it is harder and harder to find volunteers, especially if your appointment is in Albuquerque. ... So how do we start addressing bigger transportation, multi-county transportation needs, without relying just on volunteers?"

Havemann noted that another challenge was "just the whole phenomenon of loneliness, and with maybe a focus on people over the age of 60 ... I was just curious if that came up?"

Strong replied that "we're looking at ways to improve community connectedness. ... Social isolation, certainly among people 60 and older, and how do we get them connected to the Senior Centers?"

Strong added that the phenomenon of loneliness was not limited to seniors. "I've heard from a number of people about the social isolation faced by 18-25-year-olds that were 14, 15, and 16 when the pandemic hit, and have just remained isolated. ... How do we get them back engaged with things?"

What's next?

In her summary, Strong said that the first phase of this health care planning process gathered first-hand experiences on the strengths and challenges of accessing health care in Los Alamos County.

The next step will be the distribution of a community-wide health survey to about 8,500 households in the County in late spring 2024, said Strong. "That survey we hope will provide the depth and the magnitude of health challenges and gaps across the County that were identified during interviews."

Upon completion of these surveys, the Social Services and the County Health Council will incorporate the broader data analysis into a complete set of recommendations to guide the development of health-related programs and services over the next one to three years.

Strong said, "I will be back here in six-ish months with the Final Comprehensive Health Plan and the full set of recommendations and action plan."

Local news coverage

Kirsten Laskey, *Los Alamos Daily Post*, April 17, 2024, <https://ladailypost.com/los-alamos-county-comprehensive-health-plan-update-identifies-challenges-and-offers-short-term-solutions/>

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

Observer Corps Report – County Council – April 9, 2024

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Housing

The regular session was attended by Chair Denise Derkacs, Vice Chair Theresa Cull, and Councilors Melanee Hand, Suzie Havemann, Keith Lepsch, David Reagor, and Randall Ryti. Our observer report is based on discussion during the meeting and documentation provided in the full agenda package.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

Council voted unanimously to adopt the updated Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan in Compliance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

In a brief presentation, Cody Ulrich, the County's Emergency Management Specialist, explained that this is an update to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2016. The Plan is required in order for the County to be eligible for certain federal disaster assistance and hazard mitigation funding, he said.

The 329-page LHMP identifies risks to the County associated with natural and manmade disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and wildfire. The plan assesses the potential impacts of these hazards and outlines strategies to reduce or eliminate risk to people, property and the environment.

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee (HMPC) included all County departments and Los Alamos Public Schools as well as representatives from LANL Engineering Services, LANL Emergency Operations, and the National Park Service.

The significance of each type of hazard was based on the proportion of the County that would be impacted by the event, the probability of future occurrences, the magnitude or severity of impacts in terms of property damage and loss of quality of life, and the need for emergency response and assistance beyond the County's capabilities.

By these criteria, the thirteen identified hazards were assigned ratings of low, medium, or high significance in the LHMP:

- High significance: Wildfire, Localized stormwater/flash flooding
- Medium-high significance: Earthquake
- Medium significance: Dam failure, 100/500-year Floods, Landslide (includes rockfall), Lightning, Thunderstorm (includes hail and monsoon)
- Low significance: Drought, High winds, Winter storm and severe cold, Volcanoes

The LHMP lists 35 actions to minimize or eliminate the above hazards, of which 13 were given a high or medium-high priority for implementation:

- Critical Utility Systems Protection
- Neighborhood Wildfire Mitigation and Public Education
- Los Alamos Townsite Evacuation
- Open Space Management
- Enhance County mitigation/removal of flammable items such as abandoned vehicles, trees, brush, and trash
- Move the repeater from the Barranca Mesa water tower at the elementary school, to the water tower at the top of hill at the entrance of Barranca Mesa
- Prescribed burning by the State of New Mexico
- Complete the Jemez Mountain Fire Protection Project
- Provide redundant/backup major HVAC equipment in County buildings
- Purchase a water buffalo for rapid deployment during wildfire
- Conduct public education and outreach for all hazard community preparedness
- Harden buildings for wildfire, such as requiring stronger building materials resistant to fire
- Clear trees near powerlines

One of the LHMP recommended high-priority actions stresses the importance of managing open space to mitigate wildfire hazards, including post-fire flooding, and of coordinating planning activities in the Open Space Management Plan and the related Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

The LHMP warns that wildfire hazards in and around the County are likely to be worsened by the trend of continuing long-term drought, warming climate, and disruption of normal storm patterns . Wildfire has removed vegetation cover from about 100,000 acres in the Los Alamos area, invasive species have increased their coverage, drought-related insect infestations have killed hundreds of old-

growth ponderosa pines, and damaging runoff during summer storms is not unusual.

To mitigate flood and wildfire hazards, the LHMP stresses that open space around Los Alamos must be managed effectively . The Open Space Management Plan identifies current problems on open space and proposed actions to correct or mitigate the issues . Addressed in the Open Space Management Plan are invasive species management, protection of contiguous wildlife corridors, revegetation of disturbed areas using drought tolerant vegetation, continued trail improvements to reduce sediment transport, and maintenance of access roads to reduce runoff and erosion . The Community Wildfire Protection Plan is based on forest health measures established in the Open Space Management Plan.

(Note that the County recently has issued a contract to update and combine the Open Space Management Plan and the Trails Management Plan this year.)

Councilor Ryti asked about the nature of public engagement activities planned for the LHMP, and whether those activities would address the entire scope of the LHMP or focus on specific aspects.

Ulrich answered, "It's usually the whole program . We have several things coming up in the future . Our partners from the National Weather Service are coming up in May to do Storm Spotter training for the public, for anyone who wants to be involved." He added that they plan to do a Preparedness class for the community in November. "Public outreach is a big effort for us," he said.

Status of Los Alamos County Housing Projects, Programs, and Activities

Council heard a comprehensive overview of current housing projects and programs from Dan Osborn (Housing and Special Project Manager in the Community Development Department (CDD)). Osborn also detailed the status of the North Mesa Housing Project and the contract status with the Los Alamos Housing Partnership. This was an

informational presentation; no Council action was requested.

Carlos Gamora (Senior Planner with Sites Southwest) reviewed the draft update of the County's Affordable Housing Plan in order to get feedback from the Council.

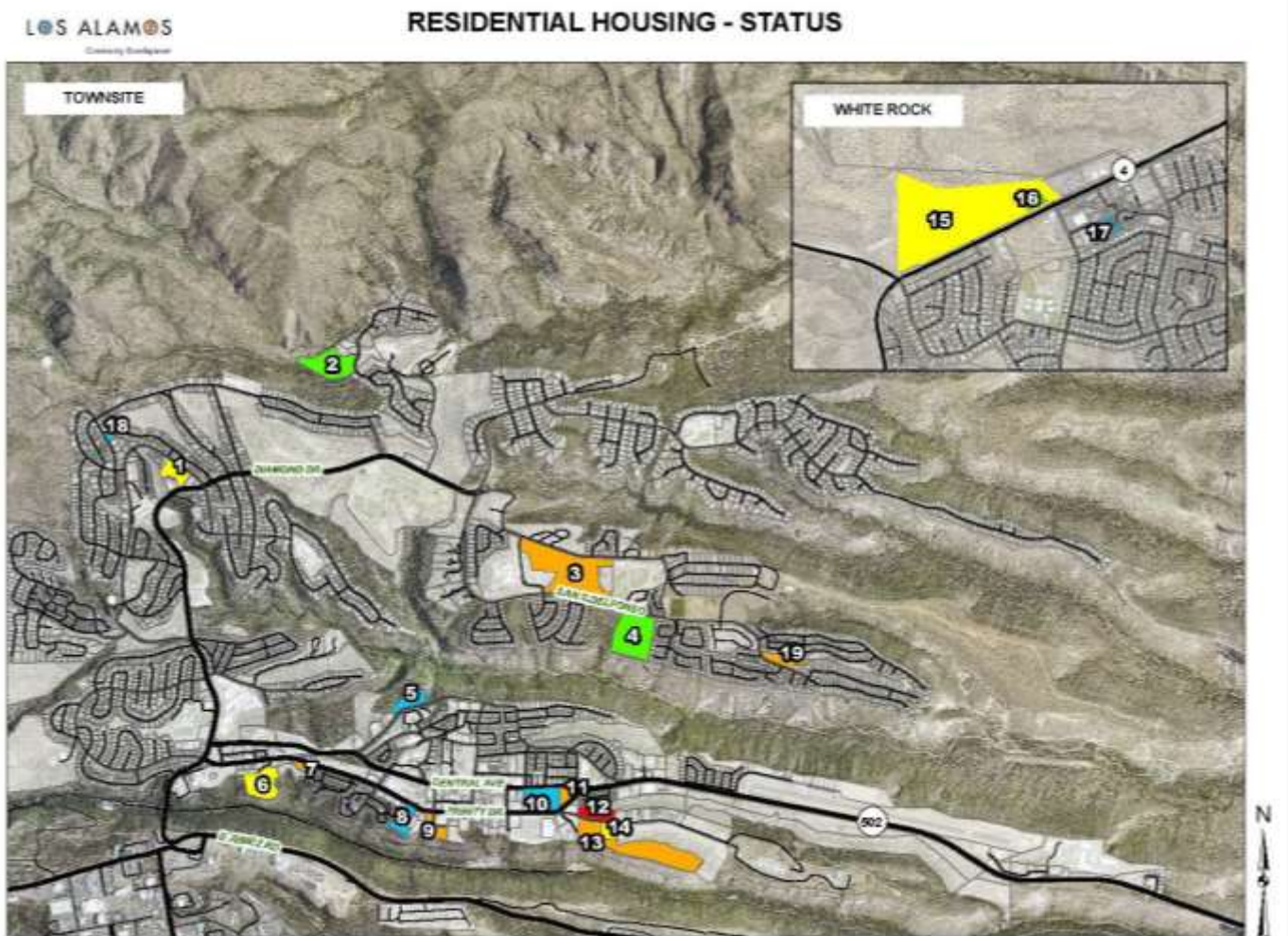
The bulk of our observer report for these critically-important agenda items will be included in next month's issue of the LWVLA *Update*.

Housing Projects in the County

For this issue of the *Update*, our report is limited to summarizing the status of new

residential housing projects in the County. Osborn enumerated the projects that have been completed since 2019, are under construction, have been reviewed or are pending review by the Planning & Zoning Commission, as well as housing projects under discussion. Altogether, these projects encompass about 1,600 to 2,100 dwelling units.

Note: in the list of projects below, the numbers in parentheses refer to the project's location on the accompanying map.



Completed (red parcels on map) or under construction (yellow parcels): 488 dwelling units

- Canyon Walk Apartments (12)—70 multi-family (MF) affordable . Fully occupied.
- The Bluffs Apartments (14) for seniors — 64 MF affordable . Leasing.

- Homes at North Community (1) — 44 single-family (SF)/condo units under construction. "They're having labor issues out there, but they are making slow progress.
- The Hills Apartments (6) —149 MF . Estimated completion Q2 2024.

- Mirador Subdivision (15) — 161 SF units; 106 completed.

Site Plan approved by Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Commission (blue parcels): 676 dwelling units

- Ponderosa Estates Phase III (2) — 48 SF units . Site Plan approved, but need discussion about utility and infrastructure work
- Arbolada Subdivision (4) — 85 SF units
- Mirador Mixed-Use (16) — 57 MF units
- Canada Bonita Apartments (5) — 160 MF units with commercial
- LA Center ("Mari-Mac") (10) — 322 MF units with commercial.
- Some are still working through their financing.

Pending, or have been through some sort of initial stage of review by P&Z Commission (green parcels): 154 dwelling units

- 2201 Trinity Drive (8) — 125 MF units with commercial
- Sherwood Rounds (17) — 29 SF units . Sketch Plan approved.
- North Community 1, Lot 271 (18) — 4 SF units

"TBD are ones that we know are coming online or that we're actively working with, and we hope to get into some sort of entitlement process soon." In the pipeline for entitlements (orange parcels): ~300–850 dwelling units, (depending on density):

- North Mesa Housing (3) — 200–400 units . To be determined (TBD).
- Canyon View (7) — 4 SF units . TBD.
- 20th Street Development (9) — 70–300 units . TBD.
- Former Hilltop House Site (11) — 58 units . TBD.
- Tract A-8-A 75 DP Road (13) — 150 units . TBD.
- North Mesa 1, Lot N13BE (19) — 4 SF units . TBD.

- 36th St. & Trinity Drive (not marked on map) — 4–6 SF/condo . TBD.
- 2400 Diamond Drive (not marked on map) — 1 unit . TBD.

Summarizing his presentation on this topic, Osborn said "All of this is to say that the Community Development Department really has been working on things, and we want to get that message out better to Council and to the community . It's slow-moving, it doesn't happen fast, but we are working on it."

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

Observer Corps Report - County Council Special Session – FY25 Budget Hearings April 22, 23, and 29, 2024

Public hearings on the FY25 budget were conducted in hybrid format over three days. The hearings were attended in person or via Zoom by Council Chair Denise Derkacs, Vice Chair Theresa Cull, and Councilors Melanee Hand, Suzie Havemann, David Reagor, and Randall Ryti . Councilor Keith Lepsch attended the hearings on April 22 and 29, but was absent from the hearings on April 23.

Much of the following information in our observer report was excerpted from the County's 2025–2026 Biennial Budget document.

Adopted FY25 County budget

During its final budget hearing on April 29, the County Council passed the FY25 budget for the County government, totaling \$377.5M, with a 6–1 vote. Councilor David Reagor cast the lone dissenting vote. The approved FY25 budget is \$4.6M less than that in the FY24 adopted budget (\$382.1M).

Projected County revenues

The County's Biennial Budget Report emphasizes that a driving force in developing the County budget each year is the estimation of County revenues. The Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) accounts for 75% of the total General Fund budgeted revenues, primarily from the community's largest employer, LANL. Property Taxes account for 7% of the budgeted revenues, and the remaining revenues are comprised of user fees, interdepartmental charges, investment income, and grants.

A large area of the proposed budget growth this year relates to the projected financing of expenditures related to broadband and other capital improvement projects, which amounts to an estimated \$75 million.

Overall, anticipated revenues for FY25 are \$410.9M, up from \$391.4M in FY24.

Changes in the FY25 budget

The County's Biennial Budget Report noted that the FY25 proposed budget includes some significant changes. New projects and initiatives include the Community Broadband Network initiative, the Greenhouse Gas Inventory and associated Climate Action Plan, and the Comprehensive Health Plan. New assessments, such as the Community Services Department's Integrated Master Plan, are now being incorporated into the County's capital and maintenance plans.

Despite currently higher GRT revenues, the budget includes a proposed new GRT increment in FY27.

Preparation of proposed FY25 budget

The budget review process began with an overview of the proposed FY25 budget and long-range financial projections from County staff.

Council then reviewed each department's base budget and any budget options for one-time or recurring expenses and voted on motions were to tentatively approve each of these. Items in need of further discussion were placed in a "parking lot" for additional

evaluation after all of the budgets had been tentatively approved.

At the end of the hearings and resolution of outstanding issues, Council voted on a final motion to approve the total budget, with any amendments, and associated fund transfers.

County guidance to departments in preparation of their proposed budgets was to allow for an average 3% adjustment in salaries (2% merit, 1% cost of labor) for non-collective bargaining employees, a 5% increase to benefits which includes an anticipated increase in medical premiums and retirement expenditures (PERA), and a non-labor expenditure target of 3%.

Elected Officials

Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve all of the proposed FY25 budgets for elected officials, for a total of \$3.2M (about equal to the FY24 adopted budget). This total includes the budgets for County Council, County Assessor's Office, County Clerk's Office, Sheriff's Office, Municipal Court, and Probate Court.

County Manager's Office (presented by County Manager Anne Laurent)

By a vote of 6–1, with Councilor Reagor in opposition, Council voted to tentatively approve the County Manager's proposed budget of \$56M (up from \$54M in the FY24 adopted budget), which includes \$35M of projected funding for the broadband program carried over from FY24.

Approval included four associated budget options to fund implementation actions recommended by the LARES (Los Alamos Resiliency, Energy, and Sustainability) Report and by the Climate Action Plan.

- \$100K for energy audit services for a contractor to evaluate 50-100 homes
- \$400K in one-time funding to develop an electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure plan, including a plan for conversion of the County fleet to EV

- \$80K for educational, marketing, and outreach services focused on greenhouse gas reduction
- \$150K for Climate Action Plan implementation including incentivizing electrification retrofits, promoting EV adoption, and other items

Seven other proposed options were placed in the "parking lot" for later discussion: four new FTEs, new EV charging stations, and two options related to the Progress through Partnering initiative.

- \$184K for an FTE for a Project Manager for Sustainability Projects
- Because the number of responsibilities assigned to the Sustainability Manager has rapidly grown with the LARES recommendations and the upcoming Climate Action Plan, the County Manager requested an FTE to assist the Sustainability Manager oversee specific projects.
- During the "parking lot" discussion, Councilor Reagor voiced concern over the total number of proposed FTEs. "We have a lot of FTEs here, and I think we should think about our current budget situation in this year, last year, next year as kind of a windfall, ... we don't want to be expanding staff as much as we want to be doing capital projects... And when you have a lot of staff it will be a big budget problem in the future. Please consider putting all that money into capital projects where it can have long-term value to the people."
- Councilor Hand responded, "I think it is justified after hearing Public Works Director Juan Rael talk about the need for additional project management support." (Rael had stated that Public Works is currently managing 88 projects with four Project Managers.)
- \$149K for an FTE Management Analyst to provide administrative support for Board and Commissions and recently added new County programs (such as broadband, sustainability, and social media).

- The County Manager's Office believes that unifying Boards and Commissions support would increase the efficiency of staff in managing the boards. Also noted was that several major programs have recently been initiated without providing additional help to the single Administrative Assistant in the County Manager's Office.
- \$140K for an FTE Human Resources (HR) Analyst to serve as the County's training coordinator and to coordinate and implement Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives.
 - \$140K for an FTE HR Analyst for Employee Relations position due to the increased workload specific to employee relations matters including collective bargaining unions.

During the "parking lot" discussion, Helen Perraglio noted that in 10 years County staff had increased from 673 employees to 766, a difference of 93 employees, while the HR staff had increased from 12 to 15 employees.

These four FTEs were approved by a vote of 6–1, with Council Reagor in opposition.

- \$550K for infrastructure and installation of 13 EV charging stations.

This item generated much discussion as Councilors Havemann and Ryti felt some urgency to install more charging stations in a faster time frame, and wanted the funding to be recurring so additional stations would be available in the near future. Councilor Cull and Chair Derkacs supported the item but suggested it be considered a one-time expense. Sustainability Manager Angelica Gurle explained that staff considered the 13 stations as a fast start that could be implemented while awaiting the results of the EV plan to consider the requirements for additional installations. Utilities Manager Phil Shelton explained, "We do need a plan to design the infrastructure. . . . The requirements for installation are unique to each type of charger and each location."

During the "parking lot" discussion, Councilor Havemann expressed concern

about making this a one-time budget item and lobbied for it to be a recurring expense. “My concern about holding off on a recurring allocation is, well, the general principle of ‘show me your budget and I’ll be able to tell what your organization values’ . So there’s some signaling that happens with it,” Havemann said . She was also concerned that further delays could happen if the funding for additional charging stations was not immediately available when the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Plan was completed.

- \$750K for two budget options related to the Progress through Partnering program.

This program is a County initiative to share GRT revenue generated through LANL that is paid to Los Alamos County with surrounding communities . It provides a means for the County to distribute funds for specific projects with Rio Arriba County, the City of Española, and others.

The initial budget option requested \$250K for continued planning and implementation of the Regional Economic Development Plan and other regional contractual services (such as developing a website), and to add \$500K to the Progress through Partnership fund for upcoming projects.

Councilor Ryti noted that GRT paid to the County has increased since the Progress through Partnering program was initiated in 2020, but the County has not increased the amount it budgets for the program accordingly.

During the “parking lot” discussion, Councilor Ryti opened with a request to clarify the fund’s purpose by renaming the County’s fund for regional assistance from Progress through Partnering to the Regional Fund. Council and staff agreed.

Following up on Councilor Ryti’s earlier comment, Helen Perraglio pointed out that, between FY22 and FY24, GRT revenues to the County increased 43%, but there had been no increase in funding for the Regional Fund. Councilor Ryti then proposed adding an additional \$250K to the

Regional Fund to bring the total for this budget option to \$750K.

The budget options for the EV charging stations, the Progress through Partnering program, and the associated Regional Fund as amended were approved by a vote of 6–1, with Council Reagor in opposition.

County Attorney's Office (presented by County Attorney Alvin Leaphart)

Council voted 6–0, with Councilor Lepsch absent, to tentatively approve the proposed budget of \$1.4M (about equal to FY24). No budget options were requested.

Administrative Services Department (ASD) (presented by Administrative Services Director Helen Perraglio)

Council voted 6–0, with Councilor Lepsch absent, to tentatively approve the proposed ASD budget of \$13.7M (up from \$12.5M in FY23 adopted budget).

This approval included a budget option for \$200K for contractual services to bring in a consultant to train County on staff on ways to fully implement the capabilities of Microsoft 365 to streamline file sharing and other applications of 365.

Community Development Department (CDD) (presented by CDD Director Paul Andrus)

Council voted 6–0, with Councilor Lepsch absent, to tentatively approve the proposed CDD budget of \$20.5M (about equal to the FY24 adopted budget).

A proposed budget option was put in the “parking lot.” The option was for \$250K for an inventory and master plan for County-owned historic properties, recommended by the Historic Preservation Board. This survey would include properties that are not currently owned by the County but are historically significant. Councilor Havemann stated she thought this was a large expenditure and observed that several members of the Historic Preservation Board had expertise and

enthusiasm in this matter. She believed that the cost of this plan could be reduced.

During the “parking lot” discussion, CDD Director Andrus stated he believed that \$100K was a reasonable estimate for such a robust evaluation of resources. This sentiment was echoed by Councilor Hand, “I served as the liaison to that board and I believe based on the discussions with that board that that plan is a necessary item for us.”

This budget option was approved as part of the final budget motion.

Community Services Department (CSD) (presented by CSD Director Cory Styron)

Council voted 6–0, with Councilor Lepsch absent, to tentatively approve the proposed CSD budget of \$33M (compared to \$32M in FY24 adopted budget), along with two budget options:

- \$122K for FTE Case Coordination Specialist to address Social Service needs and aging population needs.

Styron explained this request: “Teens have a variety of options to receive help, but there is not one who specializes in the older adult area. This came through conversations with the Los Alamos Retired and Senior Organization executive about some of the needs they are starting to see. Right now about half of our homeless that we serve are over 60, and we are trying to help them.”

- \$100K for implementation of Comprehensive Health Plan recommendations . This plan will be delivered in about six months.

Fire Department (presented by Fire Chief Troy Hughes)

Council voted 6–0, with Councilor Lepsch absent, to tentatively approve the proposed Fire Department budget of \$56M (about equal to the FY24 adopted budget).

Hughes reminded Council that the budget being presented was not the department’s entire budget. DOE picks up costs for nearly

all of the department’s expensive assets. The three fire stations on LANL property are 100% funded by DOE. Nearly all of the department’s vehicles are also owned by DOE, with two ladder trucks and three more engines on order for \$5.1M, for which DOE will pay.

Police Department (presented by Deputy Police Chief Oliver Morris)

Council voted 6–0, with Councilor Lepsch absent, to tentatively approve the proposed Police Department budget of \$15M (compared to \$14M in FY24 adopted budget), along with the following budget options:

- \$327K to replace 55 hand-held radios with newer models with additional channels for communicating with additional agencies
- \$140K for an FTE in Records Management to handle the 200% increase in public information requests. Much of the additional work brought on by the increase in requests is due to state mandated media redaction requirements on body camera recordings.

A request for \$149K for an FTE shared with the Administrative Services Division was placed in the parking lot. Helen Perraglio explained that currently grant management and budget tasks are handled by senior police officers, taking time away from command duties. This position would bring on an administrative specialist to manage grants and assist with budget matters and allow police managers to get back into the field. In addition, Perraglio noted that centralizing management of grants to one person (rather than splitting the duty between seven officers), would reduce a high-risk situation of being non-compliant with grant requirements because of lack of communication between the managers. This request was approved after the “parking lot” discussion.

Public Works Department (presented by Public Works Manager Juan Rael)

Council voted 6–0, with Councilor Lepsch absent, to tentatively approve the Public Works budget of \$67M (up from \$61M in FY24

adopted budget), with a large part of the increase going to fulfill the needs of deferred maintenance issues pointed out in a study approved in last year's budget.

In addition, Council approved three budget options:

- \$120K for transportation planning. Rael explained that in the past this has been a one-time request in past budgets but, with the increased "asks" brought about during the planning, it is now being requested as a recurring budget item. The funds would be used to bring in consultants for short-term reviews of traffic plans, plan updates, and other reviews as needed.
- \$65K to upgrade scheduled vehicle replacements from gas-powered to EV units.
- \$75K for purchase of a utility lift and trailer for exterior building maintenance, parking lot light maintenance, and increased replacement efforts for dark sky compliance. Rael explained that such equipment is currently rented when needed, but rentals are increasingly unavailable, causing unacceptable delays in maintenance.

Department of Public Utilities (DPU) (presented by Utilities Manager Philo Shelton and Karen Kendall, Deputy Utilities Manager for Finance and Administration)

Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the DPU proposed budget of \$99M (compared to \$117M in FY24 adopted budget).

The budget reflects lower prices paid for natural gas in FY24, offset by the effect of planned rate changes previously approved by the Board of Public Utilities and the County Council.

Non-departmental budget (presented by Helen Perraglio, Administrative Services Director)

Council voted unanimously to tentatively approve the non-departmental proposed

budget of \$5.1M (compared to \$6.1M in FY24 adopted budget). These budget items are for debt service and a loan related to emergency recovery following the 2011 Las Conchas fire.

Capital Projects (presented by County Manager Anne Laurent)

By approving the final budget motion, Council approved the proposed Capital Projects budget of \$77.0M (compared to \$82.1M adopted in FY24). FY25 projects will include street improvements, traffic signals, ballfield renovations, ADA upgrades at parks and recreational facilities, and golf cart electrification infrastructure.

Final Discussion and Vote

By votes of 6–1, with Councilor Reagor in opposition, Council approved the proposed and amended budget options, the Capital Projects budget, and the complete FY25 budget for \$377.5M.

Councilor Reagor started the discussion before that vote. "I just want to point out that if all of you were potted plants, it would come out about the same way. Because you just approved everything that staff put together, it's like the Council doesn't have to be here. You move right down the line, approve every single thing, and it's like we're doing a process, but it's not really a process. . . . I wish you had a little more thinking about what's good for the long-term County budget, at least a little more probing of what's being presented, but I guess now you can vote on the budget exactly the way it was given to you by staff. That's alright."

Councilor Cull responded to Councilor Reagor's comments. "We just spent 12 hours discussing the budget and the budget options, and I feel pretty confident that County staff and our new County Manager have justified the expenditures that were presented. And I plan to vote for this."

Councilor Havemann said, "I can kind of see where Councilor Reagor is coming from, the way it could be perceived, but I absolutely concur with Councilor Cull and I think there has been a lot of probing and I think all of us did a lot of probing and studying and reading and

asking questions and meeting prior to the budget hearings trying to understand the rationale behind these things. I don't think any of us take these decisions lightly. I want to go on record with reasons for supporting this."

Councilor Lepsch added, "I believe that our new County Manager has represented the goals that we have told her that are important to us, which is probably why we are approving everything that has been suggested because it's really what we suggested, that she implemented for us."

Councilor Ryti said, "I want to thank the County Manager that during transition that this budget reflects the Council priorities. I know that we don't all necessarily agree on all the priorities, and so I'm sure that is where some of our Councilor comments come from. But I wanted to make sure we had all the information we needed to justify those, and I was satisfied with the explanations that I heard through the course of the budget hearings."

Local news coverage

Kirsten Laskey, *Los Alamos Daily Post*, April 30, 2024, <https://ladailypost.com/county-council-approves-377-4-million-fy-2025-budget/>

Los Alamos County Public Release, May 3, 2024. "Council adopts FY 2025 budget totaling \$377 million", <https://www.losalamosnm.us/News-articles/Council-adopts-FY-2025-budget-totaling-377-million>

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

Observer Corps Report – Planning & Zoning Commission – April 10, 2024

The Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Commission meeting was attended in person by Vice Chair Stephanie Nakhleh and Commissioners Katherine Bruell, Karen Easton, David Hampton, Benjamin Hill, and Rebecca White. Chair Rachel Adler attended the meeting via Zoom.

Site Plan Approval for Construction of a Commercial Building on Trinity Drive

By a vote of 6–0, the Commission approved the site plan for new construction on Trinity Drive directly across from Ashley Pond on the south side of Trinity Drive, in an area zoned for mixed use . Commissioner Easton recused herself.

Anne Kane, on behalf of Century Bank, presented the basic configuration of the proposed new building . The first floor would hold a small coffee shop and bank operations, the second floor, additional bank operations, and the third and fourth floors would be leased office space. Parking would be in the rear of the building. Kane stressed that the current site plan proposal was for the front third of the property only, with the back two-thirds reserved for future development.

Architect John Graham of Anderson Mason Dale Architects further detailed the site plan, showing drawings of the four stories and a small enclosed "observation deck" atop the fourth story . Graham also noted that access to the proposed Canyon Rim Trail would be provided by a 10-foot wide sidewalk along the west edge of the property to Trinity Drive . The building would be set back from Trinity to allow a sidewalk and landscaping between the structure and the road.

During questioning, Commission Nakhleh asked if additional building height had been considered. Kane replied that self-financing of bank construction required that at least 50 percent of the structure be used for banking, and thus additional stories would go against this regulation.

Commissioner Bruell asked about the existing trail easement near the rear of the property. Kane answered that the current site plan request did not include that part of the property, but that the Canyon Rim Trail would be part of the site plan for the remaining portion of the property.

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

April Lunch with a Leader: JJAB Executive Director Rachel Mohr-Richards

Rachel Mohr-Richards, the Executive Director of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board (JJAB), began her talk with the announcement that JJAB is now twenty years old. In 2004 the County Council and Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS) created the board because there was a need for youth involved with law enforcement to have basic services locally instead of being sent out of the County. Since then JJAB has become a 501(c)(3) and expanded tremendously. Their mission is to provide resources to children, youth, and families of Los Alamos to enhance resiliency.

Municipal Judge Elizabeth

Allen is chair of the 15-member board, which includes youth liaisons, a County Council liaison, and Jessica Strong, the Director of Social Services.

JJAB now funds about fifteen programs and services. Mohr-Richards described the five “Direct Service” plans. The largest, the Resource Specialist Program, was started in 2012 and provides personalized case management at no charge. Students aged 5-18 attending school in Los Alamos County are eligible. To create a case plan, the Resource Specialist meets first with the parents, then with the youth to see what support is needed. In 2023 197 youths were served and there were 925 referrals for service. A grant from the Delle Foundation has enabled the program to be extended to children from birth to 5 years.

One Circle is a support group for youth 10-18 to help build peer connections. In 2023 131 students were engaged in 19 groups. They meet with facilitators in the schools and address issues such as body image, family relationships, and bullying.

The Restorative Justice Program is directed by Judge Allen. Youth who have received a criminal citation meet with the victim and sometimes with representatives of the community. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, understand the harm they have caused, and given an opportunity to make amends. Following conferences, a restorative agreement allows 90 days for the youth to fulfill the terms, perhaps by doing community service. In 2023 the program received 22 referrals.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is available to all children from birth to age 5 residing in Los Alamos County. The children receive a book in the mail every month. It is designed to encourage the love of reading and promote family engagement. In 2023 615 children were served; 33,879 books have been sent since the program’s inception in 2017.



Rachel Mohr-Richards speaking at Lunch with a Leader. Photo by Becky Shankland

The fifth direct service plan is Youth Mental Health First Aid, an evidence-based program that teaches anyone in the community about typical adolescent development, explains common mental health challenges, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people who have a problem. Since 2016 over 500 adults have engaged in the program, which aims to help alleviate the shortage of professionals.

JJAB also funds many Partner Programs and Special Projects. Community Conversations, one of the partner programs, is a collaboration between JJAB, LAC Social Services, LAPS, and the LA Municipal Court. Each Community Conversation is held in response to an emerging need in the community with the goal of providing relevant and factual information on youth issues, to identify gaps facing our community, and to advocate for positive change in addressing community challenges. One recent meeting was focused on the fentanyl crisis and trained the participants how to use Narcan.

Other collaborative programs administered in the schools include Aspen Helpers for fifth and sixth grade students, and Social Emotional Learning, which provides opportunity for youth to understand their emotions and to develop more empathy for others. The Teen Center programs offered are Youth Mobilizers, offering a safe place for fun such as theme parties, cooking classes, and field trips; and Arts and Resiliency, a therapeutic arts program.

Finally, Mohr-Richards described a special project, the school supply and winter clothing drives conducted every year to provide needed materials and warm clothing for children in the County. In 2023 they purchased warm clothing for 67 kids and raised \$6,500 for school supplies.

Barbara Calef

Minutes of the League of Women Voters/Los Alamos

*Thursday, April 18, 2024
Fellowship Hall of the Unitarian Church
1738 North Sage Loop
Los Alamos, New Mexico*

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 1:20 P.M. with 18 members in attendance. Quorum was met to proceed with the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Felicia Orth, President of the Los Alamos League.

Minutes:

The minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting, recorded by Rebecca Chaiken, Secretary, were accepted as presented. They were published in the June 2023 *Update*. The readers for the 2024 Annual Meeting minutes are Maire O'Neill and Barbara Calef.



Becky Shankland, Barbara Calef, and other members at the Annual meeting. Photo by Maire O'Neill

President's Report:

Felicia Orth presented the report, noting the many activities and outreach to the community. The Lunch with-a Leader monthly guest speaker program, organized by Karyl Ann Armbruster, included a wide variety of topics and skilled speakers, always followed by informative question and answer sessions. League members have registered voters in a number of settings and sites, advocated at the state legislature, monitored, and reported on Los Alamos County Council meetings, established a vibrant Fundraising Committee with expanded fundraising efforts, hosted candidate forums, and compiled the Voter Guides for the primary and general elections. The Voter Guides are provided at no cost and are distributed to 9,600 households in Los Alamos County and at several public venues including the Los Alamos County Municipal Building, where many residents go to vote. In the post-pandemic world, the League of Women Voters is hosting in-person events with wide participation from the community. Presentations via Zoom continue to be in place for out-of-town speakers. Bob Williams video records events, and Ed Santiago posts the recordings to the League website.

Membership Report:

Jean Dewart reported that as of April 15, 2024 there are 130 individual members; 7 new members have joined in the past month, and to date 9 renewals have been turned in . There is

approximately a 2-week lag to register membership renewals. PayPal has proved to be a challenge to many users with the two-step process to pay using the app. A recommendation to the Board is to send a brief email stating that the official membership year is May 1 – April 30. As of April 18, 99 out of 130 members had not yet renewed, but several forms and payments were submitted at the Annual Meeting. Bob Williams will be the new Membership Chair. He has been creating a new data base format to improve data collection in several categories, including interests and areas to volunteer. There will also be an online registration process available.

Bob, Lisa Hampton, and Treasurer Addie Jacobson will coordinate to keep the data updated. Board members will have “Read Only” access. Further discussion among board members will occur in the coming months. The list of Friends of the League, people who donate to the League but are not members, has been updated and additional friends added. This information contained in the new Fundraising database also tracks donations and holds over 100 company names that have recently received mailings from the League.

Treasurer's Report:

Addie Jacobson reviewed the proposed budget. Additional funds were allocated for travel to the national League of Women Voters Convention this coming June. Also, the Fuller Lodge rental fees have increased in 2024. The overall current expenses and revenues indicate that the League is within budget expectations for FY25. Barbara Calef moved to accept the FY25 proposed budget. Ann LePage seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Program

Environment Position:

Barbara Calef explained that at the Annual Meeting last year League members approved updating our Environment position, which contained references to several County documents, some dating back to 2005. At the 2023 Annual Meeting and at the Program Planning Meeting on January 29 she invited volunteers to help with the update.

Akkana Peck, Dave North, Ann LePage, and Jody Benson assisted in reviewing the documents used to formulate the position. During the February Board meeting, the Board approved the draft document. A new section concerns recycling, including League support for the County to expand recycling within its operations, and to avoid unnecessary packaging, especially plastic water bottles.

The revised positions, with deleted material crossed out and new material underlined, was sent to all League members before the meeting.

Judy Buckingham made the motion to accept the changes to the Environment Position. Becky Shankland seconded the motion. There was no discussion about the draft changes. The motion passed unanimously.

Sustainable Water Position:

The committee also added a bullet encouraging regional protection of groundwater to the Sustainable Water position.

Jean Dewart made the motion to accept changes to the Sustainable Water Position. Bob Williams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Medically Indigent Health Care Fund:

A request was made by Lisa Hampton to rename the position the “Indigent Health Care Fund.” The fund is now managed by the Social Services Division. The request was approved by the members.

Karyl Ann Armbruster made the motion to accept all of the LWVLA positions . Addie Jacobson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board had voted to write to the County Council about rezoning changes. During recent discussion at a County Council meeting, the Council cited the League of Women Voters letter regarding adjustments/updates to the code. The Council stated the updates would be completed by Fall 2024.

Health Care Forum–

League members at the Program Planning Meeting expressed an interest in learning more about community health care. Cam Counters and Lisa Hampton will plan a community forum on this topic after the general election this coming November. The planning involves inviting speakers, determining a location and logistics, refreshments, and development of an after-forum survey to gather responses to the forum.

Pit Production Study:

Jody Benson has removed the study of pit production from the program for now.

Nominations

The Slate of Officers and Directors for 2024-2025 was presented by Becky Shankland.

Officers:

- President: Felicia Orth
- 1st Vice-President: [open]
- 2nd Vice-President: Ellen Mills
- Past President: Barbara Calef
- Secretary: Rebecca Chaiken
- Treasurer: Addie Jacobson

Directors:

- Lunch with a Leader: Karyl Ann Armbruster
- Newsletter Editor; Archivist; Membership: Robert Williams
- Publicity: Jody Benson
- Voter Services/Voter Guide: Lynn Jones
- Community Health and Wellbeing: Lisa Hampton
- Reservations and Refreshments: Wendy Swanson
- Director at Large: Akkana Peck
- Director at Large: Becky Shankland

Off-board Directors

- Membership: Jean Dewart
- Website/Social Media: Madhavi Garimella and Helena Whyte
- Observer Corps: June Fabryka-Martin, Craig Martin
- Nominations: Becky Shankland, Ed Santiago

- Fundraising: Ellen Mills
- Video: Ed Santiago
- Budget: appointed two months before Annual Meeting

Committees

- Voter Guide, Voter Services: Lynn Jones, chair, Cynthia Biddlecomb, Judy Prono, Jody Benson
- Voter Guide Questions: Jean Dewart, chair, Akkana Peck, Karyl Ann Armbruster, Jody Benson, June Fabryka-Martin, Craig Martin, Lisa Hampton, Wendy Swanson, Cecile Hemez
- Fundraising: Ellen Mills, chair, Jess Taylor, Lisa Hampton, Tracy McFarland, Leslie Wallstrom, Karyl Ann Armbruster, Jody Benson, Felicia Orth
- Membership: Bob Williams, chair, Jean Dewart, Lynn Jones, Addie Jacobson, Becky Shankland, Tracy McFarland, Helen Carpenter, Karyl Ann Armbruster
- Lunch with a Leader: Karyl Ann Armbruster, chair, Elaine Deschamp
- Community Health and Wellbeing: Lisa Hampton, chair, Cam Counters
- Budget: Julie Williams-Hill, chair, Jeffrey Howell, Addie Jacobson, Jean Dewart [Committee to be appointed two months before Annual Meeting]
- Advocacy: Felicia Orth, Barbara Calef, Jody Benson, Ann LePage, Gwendolyn Gallagher
- Voter Registration: Many members have volunteered; they must be certified by the County Clerk.
- Refreshments: Many members have signed up and should volunteer when needed.

There were no nominations from the floor. Ann LePage moved to accept the proposed slate of officers and directors. Addie Jacobson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

No vote is needed for the off-board directors or the committees. However, there was further discussion regarding the committees. Maire O'Neill proposed expanding the Website/Social Media team to add a couple of additional volunteers to assist Madhavi Garimella and Helena Whyte.

There was also a suggestion that Kirsten Laskey and Maire O'Neill might coordinate with June on the reporting of Council and other County meetings and publish their reports in the *LADP*, *LA Reporter*, and *Boomtown* to reach a wider audience. The board will need to approve the plan.

Jean Dewart volunteered to review our current Facebook page as a starting point. Maire O'Neill volunteered to call interested people for Social Media participation and reporting on League activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Minutes by Ellen Mills

Reviewed by Barbara Calef, Maire O'Neill, and Becky Shankland

Tickler Reports – Council Agenda Items and BCC Vacancies

Tickler Report

Tentative Council Agenda Items as of May 1, 2024

This is a partial list of tentative Council agenda items in the County tickler provided by the County Public Information Officer on May 1, 2024. All of the items are subject to change.

- Designating the East Downtown Los Alamos Metropolitan Redevelopment Area
 - Public Hearing at 5/7/24 meeting

County BCC Vacancies as of April 30, 2024

Los Alamos County has 11 standing Boards and Commissions (BCCs). Generally, the purpose of a board is to serve in an advisory capacity to the County Council, but some have statutory responsibilities as well.

All BCCs and current vacancies are below as of April 30, 2024.

Upcoming vacancies are in yellow text. Changes from last report have a magenta highlight.

- Art in Public Places Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Board of Public Utilities 0
 - 1 term ending Jun 30, 2024
- County Health Council 6
 - No terms ending soon
- Environmental Sustainability Board 0
 - Five terms ending July 31, 2024
- Historic Preservation Advisory Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Library Board 0
 - 3 terms ending Aug 31, 2024
- Lodgers' Tax Advisory Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Parks and Recreation Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Personnel Board 0
 - No terms ending soon
- Planning and Zoning Commission 2
 - No terms ending soon
- Transportation Board 2
 - No terms ending soon

Totals: 10 vacancies, 9 terms ending soon

Interested Los Alamos County residents may submit an online application by visiting the County's Boards and Commissions webpage and selecting "apply."

https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/boards__commissions



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

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

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ Date: _____

_____ ZIP: _____

Phone 1: _____ E-mail 1: _____

Phone 2: _____ E-mail 2: _____

Membership Categories: All checks for memberships and contributions should be payable to LWV-Los Alamos and all are tax-deductible. Let us know if you'd like a tax-deduction statement. A substantial portion of Single and Household membership dues supports state and national League of Women Voters work.

_____ Single membership: \$45.

_____ Household membership (two or more people at the same address): \$70.

_____ Single Sustaining membership: \$75.

_____ Household Sustaining membership (two or more people at the same address): \$95.

_____ Student membership: Free (must be 16 or over).

_____ Additional donation to support the Los Alamos LWV work: \$ _____

_____ **Newsletter Update** – Check here to receive it as an electronic file, saving postage and paper,

_____ **OR** Check here if you prefer to have a hard copy of the newsletter mailed to you.

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

Ways to help the League if you wish to be an active member (check as many as apply)

Name1 Name2

_____ _____ Voter Registration at events such as the Farmers Market. Training by the County Clerk's office.

_____ _____ Organize/provide refreshments at forums when we meet in person.

_____ _____ Observer Corps: Watch Council, DPU, P&Z meetings etc. and write a short summary to publish in our newsletter. (All meetings are recorded, so you can watch them later.)

_____ _____ Write newsletter articles on a local issue or League activity.

_____ _____ Assist in developing the Voter Guide: edit, develop questions, enter data onto League database, work with news publications to get the information printed, etc.

_____ _____ Assist with Lunch with a Leader: assist in inviting leaders to give presentations; order/deliver lunches when we meet in person, help set up tables, etc.

_____ _____ Website/social media: technical assistance and content development.

_____ _____ Advocate for League positions: communicate with local, state, and federal leaders.

_____ _____ Serve on the LWV-Los Alamos Board.

_____ _____ Other: _____

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