



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

Website: www.lwvlosalamos.org

Volume 69, Number 2
July 2016

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Calendar

- July 4 **Independence Day**
- July 19 Lunch with a Leader, Tewa Women United, Mesa Public Library, 11:45 a.m.
- July 28 Board Meeting, Mesa Public Library, noon

Lunch with a Leader: Tewa Women United

Our speakers for LWV in July will be two women from Tewa Women United (TWU). The mission of TWU is to provide safe spaces for indigenous women to uncover the power, strength, and skills they possess to become positive forces for social change in their families and communities.

TWU is a collective of intertribal, multicultural women who reside in the Tewa Pueblo homelands of northern New Mexico. The organization started in 1989 as a support group for women concerned with the traumatic effects of colonization leading to issues such as alcoholism, suicide, domestic and sexual violence. In 2001 TWU transitioned from an informal, all-volunteer group into a formal nonprofit organization for educational, social, and benevolent purposes, particularly with the intention, as Native women leaders, to promote a healthy environment, strengthen families, reduce poverty, and address the root causes of many health and social justice disparities. Their service area covers the pueblos/tribal nations and diverse rural and underserved communities located in northern New Mexico.

Karyl Ann Armbruster

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016-17

Officers

President: Wendee Brunish
1st VP: *not filled*
2nd VP: Rebecca Shankland
Treasurer: Kathy Taylor
Secretary: Barbara Calef

Directors

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

Off Board Directors

Arrangements: Mary Van Eeckhout
Fundraising: *not filled*
Webmaster: Barbara Lemmick
Assistant Webmaster: Julie Williams-Hill
Observer Corps: Lynn Jones
Newsletter Editor: Kathy Taylor
Nominating Committee: Carroll Thomas, Tarin Nix

Report of June LWL: Tamara Baer

Tamara Baer, Principal Planner for the Community Development Department (CDD) of Los Alamos County, spoke about the on-going development of the comprehensive plan at Lunch with a Leader in June. The policy document that will be adopted by the County Council will guide development over the next ten to twenty years. The comprehensive plan is an aspirational document, providing answers to questions such as, "What do we want to look like?" The answers will be used to guide physical development in the county as well as spending on capital improvements, utilities, and transportation.

Baer told the group that in 1964 the Lab hired a planning firm that predicted a population of 35,000 for the County by 1985! The last complete comprehensive plan was adopted in 1987. From 2001 to 2004 there was a huge effort to produce a new plan with community input. The result was adoption of a policy plan by Council in 2005. Many of the objectives of that plan have now been accomplished.

Since then a number of plans have been adopted including the 2009 Downtown Element and the 2014 Economic Development Strategy Plan, and will be included in the new plan. For the current effort, the Council has requested a high-level policy document to be completed by the end of 2016. In January the Council adopted a Strategic Policy Plan, shifting the focus to maximize the opportunities of the Manhattan Project National Park. More recently the Lab has announced that they will hire 2,400 people in the next five years.

The public outreach for the development of the 2016 comprehensive plan began with three public meetings in March. That first round confirmed that the vision of residents for their community has not changed and the strategic goals are appropriate. Then, in May, a survey was sent to 3,000 residents. 599 were returned. 65% of the respondents said they plan to retire here. Of course not all the new LANL employees will choose to live in the county.

Baer says that the CDD is not predicting growth, but is planning for a population increase of 2,000.

In the second round of public meetings residents are being asked for input regarding three topics: residential development, the downtown and economic vitality, and open space. The last meeting took place in White Rock on Wednesday, June 29. Prior to each meeting a framing paper is posted on the comprehensive plan website to frame the discussion. The dedicated website is losalamoscountycompplan2016.com.

Also on the site are the results of the various surveys conducted by the CDD, a series of white papers written before the first round of meetings, and a history of planning in Los Alamos.

The P&Z will have working sessions on July 30 and August 6 to discuss the elements of the plan in more detail. The meetings will be open to the public. For the next stage the staff will craft a land use map with direction from the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z). A land use map, like the comprehensive plan policy document, is adopted by resolution and does not have the force of law, but can inform the zoning. Los Alamos has never adopted a land use map.

Once the County Council has adopted the new policy plan and land use map, work can proceed on revising the development code and zoning map, which must be adopted by ordinance and become law. The issues are more technical and the process for the updates has not yet been discussed. Baer mentioned that there are lots of clean-up items in the development code that are not controversial.

Barbara Calef

Observer Corps Reports County Council - June

The County Council passed a resolution at their June 14th meeting that sends the question of whether or not Los Alamos County should have a sheriff to the voters in the fall General Election. This was somewhat controversial, and passed by a 4-3 vote. So, in the fall the voters will decide if our county will continue to have a sheriff's office or not.

The County Manager reported that the county has begun construction of the next leg of the Canyon Rim Trail. This segment runs behind Fire Station 6 on East Road, along the canyon, and ultimately to Smith's Marketplace. This will be a 10-foot wide multiuse trail with retaining walls and a bridge. Completion is expected in late 2016 or early 2017 depending on weather. What a great addition to our trail system!

The public meetings to hammer out the main ingredients for the Los Alamos County Comprehensive Plan continue to get good participation from the community. Meetings are currently being held to get citizen input on what they want to see in the residential areas; the downtown; and open spaces, trails, and circulation.

Lynn Jones

Board of Public Utilities - June

The Board of Public Utilities met on Wednesday, June 15th. Department of Public Utilities staff brought to the Board, for discussion only, a recommendation to raise water rates. Revenue for the water utility in fiscal year 2016 is down due to a previous wet year. As a result, Department staff will bring a proposed ordinance to the Board in July to raise water rates by 10 percent. If approved, the proposed ordinance will go to Council to be considered for adoption. A presentation was also given by staff on how it plans to implement the five highest priority recommendations coming from the Future Energy Resources (FER) Committee. Board members requested that staff return to the July meeting and provide more details to the plan.

The FER recommendations, approved by the Board, guide the Department to achieve a long-term goal to become a carbon neutral electric provider by 2040.

A special meeting was held on June 24th to approve the utilities portion of the Public Works project to repave Central from 9th to just west of 15th Street. Project was approved.

Julie Williams-Hill

LWVUS Convention Report

Three Los Alamos League members (Wendee Brunish, Akkana Peck, and Becky Shankland) attended the LWVUS Biennial Convention in Washington, DC earlier this month. Wendee had planned to write this report, but is instead helping out her mother in Portland this week. Here is a summary based on Wendee's and Akkana's notes.

Both Wendee and Akkana said the talks presented during the plenary sessions were extremely good – excellent speakers with very thought-provoking topics. Here are brief summaries of some of them.

In a talk titled “Engaging Millennials in Our Elections,” Jennifer Lawless, Director, Women & Politics Institute, American University, said surveys show that young people try to avoid discussing or getting involved in politics because, for people who know only the last few decades, politics is something divisive that leads to shouting and broken friendships, and discussing politics never leads to any real change. She advised League members to keep that in mind when recruiting.

Arturo Vargas, Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, noted the impact of voter suppression laws on Latino voters in several states. He said that despite such efforts about 13 million out of 27 million eligible Latino voters will go to the polls in November. He urged the LWV to continue our efforts to register and educate voters and suggested that we attend

naturalization ceremonies to register new voters who are eager to vote but who may face economic and language barriers in their efforts to use their new voice.

Peter Overby, a correspondent for National Public Radio, reported on recent efforts to decrease the effect on big money in politics and to educate and engage the electorate. He told the delegates that members of Congress spend 40% of their time soliciting money! One effort he described is the Citizen Initiative Review (CIR) boards being piloted in Oregon. Research shows that the CIR boards have high credibility with the public and are a cost-effective and simple way to educate the electorate about complex ballot issues.

Here is Akkana's report of Ari Berman's talk: The Saturday night banquet speaker was Ari Berman, author of Give Us the Ballot: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America and he was fabulous. Did you know that Chief Justice John Roberts has been an active opponent of the Voting Rights Act since he was in law school? The Citizens United decision didn't come out of thin air. Berman spoke at length about the history of the Voting Rights Act as well as what's happened to voting rights recently. Too much good stuff to try to summarize it -- I hope they'll upload the video of his talk, and I definitely want to read his book.

Between talks and caucus meetings, the delegates discussed the program for the next biennium, elected a new slate of officers and directors, passed some bylaws changes and adopted some resolutions.

The Convention voted to adopt the proposed LWVUS Program for 2016-18: Campaign for Making Democracy Work. Few new studies were proposed, and LWVUS strongly discouraged them, saying the organization must focus on elections issues in the next biennium. No study proposals were presented to Convention.

There were two concurrences under debate: the national redistricting position and the one on behavioral health. Behavioral health wasn't

contentious, but a couple of leagues had a dense information sheet they passed out detailing their opposition to the redistricting position. They had a few good points, like the lack of multi-rep districts or options like ranked choice voting, but those were buried in a page of small print, and their opposition didn't fly. Both concurrences passed.

The LWVUS Bylaws were amended to remove the requirement that full members be citizens. Also, the age for full membership was reduced from 18 to 16. Non-citizens and youth under 16 can still be associate members. This means that our LWVLA bylaws will need to be changed, too.

Resolutions are the way members can convey their sense of League advocacy priorities. Many of the proposed resolutions were passed, including one to support restoration of funding for gun violence research at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). There were also three resolutions in support of action to reduce fossil fuel consumption, including support for the plaintiffs from Our Children's Trust, support for US ratification of the UN COP 21 Paris Agreement, and directions to the national League to work for full implementation of the EPA Clean Power Plan.

For more news about the Convention, read the Summer Edition of La Palabra.

Wendee Brunish and Akkana Peck, edited by Barbara Calef

LWVLA ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, April 19, 2016
Mesa Public Library, Los Alamos, NM**

Board Members Present

Barbara Calef, President
Wendee Brunish, First Vice President
Becky Shankland, Second Vice President
Rosmarie Frederickson, Treasurer
Julie Williams-Hill, Secretary
Tarin Nix, Membership
Amy Birnbaum, Reservations
Karyl Ann Armbruster, Lunch with a Leader
Jody Benson, Publicity
Kathy Taylor, Budget
Barbara Lemmick, Webmaster
As well as approximately 20 other LWV members

Call to Order

Barbara Calef called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Two LWV members reviewed and corrected the 2015 annual meeting minutes which were included in the June 2015 Los Alamos LWV Update. Barbara asked for two individuals to review and correct the 2016 meeting minutes that will be generated from today's meeting. Jody Benson and Becky Shankland volunteered.

President's Report

Barbara Calef welcomed the group. She recapped the year's activities as well as what's ahead.

Membership Report

Tarin Nix shared that she was on a conference call two weeks ago with the Santa Fe League. She gleaned some ideas to increase the registration levels, such as fund raisers and free movie nights.

Currently Los Alamos LWV has 60 members. There is a registration drive underway. Tarin's

goal is to increase membership to 70 this year and work up to a 100 by next year. She submitted a letter to the editor encouraging citizens to become engaged and join the LWV.

Treasurer's Report

Rosmarie Frederickson reported that the Los Alamos LWV began the year with \$7,389.99 in its checking account. For the past year a total of \$2,196.97 was raised and \$4,306.74 was expended, leaving the checking account balance at \$5,280.22.

Rosmarie explained that the expenses totaling \$4,306.76 are broken down into three categories:

1. Administration. \$3,321 was spent on items such as the post office box, printing brochures, webpage hosting and PMP to both state and national.
2. Program. \$916.67 was spent on forums, hosted events, advertising, Fuller Lodge rentals, dinners and lunches for speakers.
3. Pass Through to the Ed Fund. \$158.91 was used for convention expenses and other miscellaneous expenses.

In addition, balances at the end of the year for the savings account and Ed Fund total \$2,144.97 and \$19,585.64, respectively.

Adoption of Local Program (Positions, studies, plans for action)

Barbara reviewed the progress made over the past year. The Los Alamos LWV Sustainability position was revised.

A question was raised at last year's annual meeting as to why candidates running for the UNM-Los Alamos Board run for a specific position as opposed to running to fill vacant seats, like the Los Alamos County Council process. Lynn Jones investigated the question and learned that the election process for the UNM-Los Alamos advisory board is specified in state statute NM Stat § 21-14-2.1. The relevant sentence says, "The candidates shall file for and be elected to a particular position number."

High school students were registered at the high school by the LWV.

A new plan to update the County Comprehensive Plan was supported by the LWV and was adopted in March by the County Council.

The Los Alamos LWV wrote a letter to the County Council that led to all County Boards live streaming and recording meetings.

An effort to reduce plastic bag use, either by imposing a fee for use or banning the bags, was supported by the LWV in conjunction with the Sierra Club. This led to two public meetings with the Environmental Sustainability Board, which was unable to agree to make a recommendation to Council. County Council directed the Environmental Sustainability Board to instead educate the public on plastic bags and other recyclable items.

Additionally, the Los Alamos LWV met with the Utilities Manager to understand the restructuring agreements of the San Juan Generating Station. This information was shared with the State LWV, who took a position.

A Future Energy Resources Committee was appointed by the Board of Public Utilities and included Kathy Taylor, Ed Birnbaum, and Don Machen, who are all League members. Their report was also presented to the LWV by Robert Gibson.

An Open Space Management Plan was supported by the LWV and adopted by the Council.

Education on a variety of subjects was supported throughout the year via the Lunch with a Leader series and a special evening talk with Emile Nakhleh.

Lynn Jones will continue to observe the County Council and Julie Williams-Hill will report on the Board of Public Utilities.

Barbara asked if there were any volunteers to follow the Planning & Zoning Board, specifically the Comprehension Plan. No one volunteered.

The LWV will be putting out a Voter Guide this year and on May 12 will host a candidate forum prior to the primary election. Four Democrats are running for the Democratic nomination to fill

three Los Alamos County Council vacancies, three Democrats are running for the Democratic nomination for District Attorney, and two Republicans are running for the Republican nomination for U.S. House of Representatives, District 3. A friendly reminder will be sent.

Barbara asked if there were specific topics that the Los Alamos LWV should study, take action on, or plan for in the upcoming year.

One topic of concern is a proposal to transfer jurisdiction of federal lands to states. Bills have been introduced to transfer lands from the US Forest Service, the Department of Energy, and the Bureau of Land Management to the State of New Mexico and tribes. Is it appropriate for the Los Alamos LWV weigh in on this discussion as it appears the decision will be made at the state and federal level? Since the Los Alamos County Council may be called upon to support or oppose such a measure, it was decided that a study was appropriate. Barbara Calef will lead the study; Kyle Wheeler and Ed Birnbaum would like to participate.

Ed Birnbaum suggested another topic of concern. He recommended that the LWV should look at the UNM-LA bylaws and recommend if they should or should not be amended to provide better guidance on filling early vacancies on its board. With the announcement of one of the UNM-LA Board members leaving prior to his term ending, it appeared that the bylaws had little or no direction on how to fill the unexpected vacancy. Barbara indicated that she would reach out to Linda Hull who was on the UNM LA Board and is a LWV member to ask her to look into this question. Barbara asked if any of the Los Alamos LWV positions need to be changed. No recommended changes were suggested.

Kyle Wheeler moved and Tarin Nix seconded that we adopt the local program. The motion was unanimously approved.

2017 Budget

Kathy Taylor presented a 4/19/2016 revised version of the budget, slightly different than what was included in the March 2016 LWVLA Update. Total budgeted expenses for 2017 are

\$5,592.50 for the General Fund and \$3,400 for the Ed Fund. This includes PMP expenses in the amount of \$2,407.50 based on 60 members, expenses to send two people to the National Convention, and expenses related to voter services that will come out of the Ed Fund. Voter services include the printing of a Voter Guide and two candidate forums. Kathy also assumed that the Ed Fund would receive \$2,100 in contributions in FY 2017.

Jody Benson asked if there were any plans for sustainability programs in FY17, similar to the FY16 plastic bag effort. Tarin suggested that the Los Alamos LWV might choose to host a movie at the Reel Deal movie theater on a relevant topic, such as “Trapped,” a movie about abortion, or “Suffragette” about women’s right to vote. Organizations that promote these movies will provide a copy to certain organizations to run for a period of time to promote an issue. No decision was made.

Akkana Peck moved and Kyle Wheeler seconded the motion to adopt the revised FY 2017 budget. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Discussions

Wendee Brunish and Akkana Peck will represent the Los Alamos LWV at the National League convention. [Later, Akkana was appointed to attend as a delegate from LWVNM, and Becky Shankland became the second delegate from LWVLA.]

Kyle Wheeler volunteered to host a “thank you note” writing party to thank individuals who donated as a result of the fund raising event held recently. The party will take place on Tuesday, May 10th at Kyle’s home.

Yvonne Flores from Las Cruces will speak about immigration at the State LWV Council meeting, which will be held in Los Alamos at the New Mexico Consortium. Register by May 12 if you would like to attend and receive lunch. The fee is \$20.

Lynn Jones has been heading up the Voter Services functions; however, she will be traveling quite a bit this year. Kyle Wheeler

volunteered to assist. Duties include coming up with questions for the Voter Guide, sending selected questions to the candidates, getting the responses, proof reading the document, determining when to publish with the Los Alamos Monitor and Daily Post. Akkana Peck and Jody Benson will also assist.

Barbara mentioned that Louise White passed away six months ago. She was instrumental in starting the Farmers Market in Los Alamos and was an active member of the Los Alamos LWV in the 1970s. A memorial will be held on May 14 at the Pajarito Environmental Education Center. Los Alamos LWV members are invited. Additionally, Louise's son mentioned that he found some documents that he thought the Los Alamos LWV might like. He will bring them to Barbara.

Election of Officer and Directors

Kyle Wheeler read the names of individuals nominated for the following positions for the 2016-2017 year:

Proposed Board of Directors:

President: Wendee Brunish
First Vice President: not filled
Second Vice President: Rebecca Shankland
Treasurer: Kathy Taylor
Secretary: Barbara Calef

Directors

Lunch with a Leader: Karyl Ann Armbruster
Membership: Tarin Nix
Reservations: Amy Birnbaum

Voter Services: Lynn Jones
Board of Public Utilities Observer: Julie Williams-Hill
Publicity: Jody Benson
Director at Large: Akkana Peck
Director at Large: Rosmarie Frederickson

Off Board Directors

Arrangements: Mary Van Eeckhout
Fundraising: not filled
Webmaster: Barbara Lemmick
Assistant Webmaster: Julie Williams-Hill
Observer Corps (Council): Lynn Jones
Newsletter Editor: Kathy Taylor
Nominating Committee: Carroll Thomas, Tarin Nix

Karyl Ann Armbruster moved to elect the nominees, Rosmarie Frederickson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Wendee Brunish and Becky Shankland both thanked the out-going President Barbara Calef for her many years of dedication to the LWV.

Next Board Meeting

April 28, 2016 at noon in the Mesa Public Library meeting room.

Newsletter

The next newsletter deadline is April 25, 2016.

Adjourned

Barbara adjourned the meeting at 2:13 p.m.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LOS ALAMOS
MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail _____

Check here if you are willing to receive our local newsletter Update as an electronic file, saving us postage.

Check here if you wish to receive friendly reminders of upcoming events by e-mail.

Membership Categories

Single membership: \$45

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

Single Sustaining membership: \$75

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

Note: Membership checks should be payable to LWV-Los Alamos

Additional ways to support the local League

Unrestricted contribution (not tax deductible): \$ _____

LWV Education Fund (tax deductible): \$ _____

Note: Checks for tax-deductible contributions must be payable to LWVLA Education Fund and not combined with any other payments.

Interests (check as many as apply)

- One-time activities (unit meetings, fund-drive mailings, etc.)
Affordable Housing
Budget, Finances
Elections
Water Issues
Land Use
Local Government
Health Care
Money in Politics
Website, social media
Other (please suggest)
Education
Living Wage
Voting Rights/Voter Services
Sustainability
Public Transportation
Public Relations
Newsletter
Membership
Not sure (I just support LWV)

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

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