# LWVNM Council Minutes

# April 25, 2020

Meeting held online

Board Members Present: Janet Blair, PR/Communications; Hannah Burling, President; Barbara Calef, 2nd Vice President; Suzanne Ronneau, Treasurer; Karen Douglas, Director; Chris Furlanetto, Program; Diane Goldfarb, Voter Services; Susan Haase, Director; Patricia Hawkins, Director; Jody Larson, Archivist; Meredith Machen, Director; Dick Mason, Action; Akkana Peck, Webmaster; Judy Williams, Past President

Delegates Present: Laura Atkins Liaison LWVSFC; Marcy Litzenberg, SFC; Karen Wentworth, Co-President, LWVCNM; Jan Strand, CNM; Becky Shankland, Co-President LWVLA; Ellen Mills LA; Eileen Van Wie, Co-President LWVSNM; Kathy Brook, Co-President LWVSNM.

Other attendees: Lynn Jones, LA; Judith Deutsch, CNM; Athena Christodoulou, CNM; Irene Epp, SFC; Erika Graf-Webster, SNM; Debbie Helper, SFC and Christine Newtson, SNM.

Absent: Kim Sorensen, Secretary.

Meeting called to order by Hannah Burling at 11:46 am.

Quorum established.

Susan Haase was approved as secretary pro tem for the Council and will be taking minutes today. Hannah informed attendees that Kim has resigned from the Board for personal reasons.

Barbara Calef and Laura Atkins volunteered to review the minutes after the meeting. When both readers are satisfied, the minutes will then be filed.

Motion to approve the agenda by Barbara Calef. Seconded by Janet Blair. Approved.

Introductions

**FEATURED SPEAKER**: Maggie Toulouse Oliver, New Mexico Secretary of State

Toulouse Oliverreviewed the recent Supreme Court ruling that requires the Secretary of State and County Clerks to send Absentee Ballot Applications to all voters registered with a major political party. This will happen this week.

The Secretary of State’s office has already received 50,000 online requests, which is more than the total number that participated by absentee voting in the 2018 election.

Those who have already applied for an absentee ballot online will not receive an application in the mail. Toulouse Oliveremphasized that all ballots need to be returned promptly. Voters can mail their ballots or drop them off at polling places.

Voters curious about the status of their ballot can check at [www.nmvote.org](http://www.nmvote.org), which has a ballot-tracking feature.

May 5 will be the launch date for ballots being mailed out. And, for anyone who has reason to believe their ballot has been lost, replacement ballots will be available at polling places. Same day voting will be offered in most counties. Registered voters can change their address, but they cannot change their political party affiliation after May 5.

Q & A:

Toulouse Oliversuggested digital advertising to publicize our use of VOTE 411 in areas of the state where we do not have local Leagues.

County clerks can begin processing absentee ballots 2 weeks before the election (separating inner and outer envelopes) and begin counting votes 5 days before the election.

Personal Protective Equipment for poll workers will be provided at a cost of close to 1 million dollars for the primary election.

An all-mail election in November would require the addition of an emergency provision in the New Mexico election statutes. This needs to be addressed during the special session to be held in June this year.

**President’s Report:** Hannah Burling congratulated Meredith Machen on her terrific job compiling the history and organizing the successful Suffrage Centennial events at the Roundhouse. Other highlights of the year’s activities included Virginia Kase’s visit for the Centennial celebration, launching VOTE 411, Spent Nuclear Fuel presentations, and getting the new JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) committee started. Especially exciting was the invitation LWVNM received from the NM Supreme Court to submit an amicus brief in the voting-by-mail case submitted by the Secretary of State and the County Clerks.

For the 2020 national convention, the business and plenary session will be held virtually. Registrants will get their fees back. Registration for the virtual meetings will be available in May.

Looking ahead, we are considering using a PayPal “DONATE” button on the LWVNM website.

**Membership Report and Official 2019 Numbers**

We have 508 members including 4 members at large.

**Treasurer’s Report and Budget (**reports attached)

Suzanne Ronneau reported she needed to move funds to cover $5,000 to VOTE411, the new sound system, ZOOM and the Directors’ insurance. Not all those items need to be expensed to this year.

Of $2500 in the budget for the Suffrage Centennial, $1,428 was not spent.

**MOTION** by Meredith Machen to use these remaining funds to promote VOTE411 for the 2020 election season. Seconded by Judy Williams. Approved.

The decision on how to spend the money on digital media will be made by a committee composed of communication directors from local Leagues as well as Janet Blair, Hannah Burling and Judy Williams. Voter Guide editors will be encouraged to participate as well.

31\_Treasurer\_Report\_LWVNM\_FY\_2019-2020.pdf

32\_Income-Expense\_one\_sheet\_2019-2020.xlsx

**Committee Reports - Action, FDNM, JEDI, SNF** (reports attached)

**Fair Districts for New Mexico:** Dick Mason reported Fair Districts activities have expended 45% of the budget to date, thus underspending. He reviewed the report (attached) and made a few additional remarks:

The gentleman doing the mapping for the national Democratic Party redistricting lives in Santa Fe.

Dick has received indications that the LWVNM Fairness Project will be re-funded by the Thornburg Foundation. They are pleased with the work the League is doing.

FDNM\_report\_200427

**LWVNM Action:** Mason reviewed the highlights of the 2020 Legislative session relative to the League’s priorities and the challenges those priorities now face due to the pandemic and the financial position of the State. He also covered the recent Supreme Court ruling on the issue of voting by mail for the upcoming elections.

The upcoming special session, expected to be held the second week of June, will offer limited opportunity for advocacy as the Governor and leadership typically reach agreement on major issues before the session is convened. Our focus will be on changing the election statutes to include emergency provisions allowing for all-mail elections. Dick has already established communications with Senator Ivey-Soto regarding this subject.

LWVNM\_Action\_Report\_200407

**JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Report** (report attached)

Irene Epp reported that four members from LWVSFC have agreed to be a small founding group willing to work toward implementing the National LWV JEDI policy into practice on the state and local league level. The four members are Rebecca Alvarez, Joanna Velasquez, Brittany Dutton and Irene Epp. They are an authorized State League committee with the core mission to make voter registration more accessible to an authentically diverse population. As a State group in New Mexico, special emphasis will be on outreach to Native populations and to working class New Mexicans. The committee will deliberately seek active, visible involvement from young women from Hispanic, Native, and other diverse NM cultures. The effort will involve specific outreach to other NM organizations with similar interests as well as to other local Leagues in New Mexico.

Epp mentioned that the group will be meeting tomorrow and exploring new strategies required due to the pandemic.

JEDI\_Report\_to\_LWVNM\_04.25.2020

**Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage** (report attached)

Karen Douglas reported that the SNF Committee held a teleconference with its Texas counterpart and received its support for the LWVNM proposed advocacy statement. The committee is reviewing the Holtec draft Environmental Impact Statement. Douglas said there wasa 60-day extension of the public comment period for the EIS. LWVNM requires additional reviewers for HOLTEC EIS and active committee members with degrees in Physics and ***Nuclear***Engineering.  Although we are pleased to welcome all interested LWV members, we currently have very few with Education/Experience to evaluate Nuclear Safety & Nuclear Radiation which are primary LWVNM concerns.

LWVNM\_SNF\_Storage\_Committee\_annual\_report\_April\_2020

**STUDIES**

**Judicial Selection** (report attached)

Suzanne reported that committee members are spending time during the pandemic researching how other states handle their lower court judicial qualifications. They expect to begin interviewing judges again after the first of the year.

Judicial Selection Study report for Council

**Voter Guide, Election Calendar, and Candidate Forums** (report attached)

Diane Goldfarb reported on LWVNM’s participation in the online Voter Guide, Vote411, for the 2020 election year. VOTE411 will be up and running by the end of this weekend when southern New Mexico gets online. Diane thanked Lynn Jones and Akkana Peck especially for all their early work in preparing the online Voter Guide.

We had a lower than expected response this year and some candidate perception that the questions revealed a bias on the part of the League. Diane indicated questions may have to be scrutinized more carefully in the future.

Barbara Calef reported Los Alamos has three online Candidate Forums planned. These will be webinars, recorded and put on YouTube. Only the press, League members, and friends of the League will be invited to register and submit questions.

Voter\_Services\_04.25.20

**Local League Reports- Sharing of Programs, Studies, Activities** (reports attached)

LWVLA\_2019-2020\_Report

LWVSNM\_AnnualReport\_to\_State\_4\_20\_2020

LWVCNM\_Report\_to\_Council\_04.25.2020

LWVSFC for\_Council\_Final

**LWVNM Planning and Directions to the Board**

Hannah requested attendees complete the form, scan, and return to the Board.

LWVNM\_Council\_2020\_Planning\_and\_Directions\_to\_the\_Board (Word version)

Hannah Adjourned Council at 2:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Haase, Secretary pro tem

Edited by Barbara Calef 4/27/20

Edited by Laura Atkins 4/28/20