

# The VOTER

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

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## President's Report by Starlyn Brown

Defending Democracy has been a continuous fight and has spanned generations. Even though progress at times seems slow, and success can sometimes feel fleeting, the League has made progress, and we will continue to make progress. Defending Democracy requires constant attention to what is happening at the local, state and national levels. I am a member of the League to work to ensure that the generations following mine still live in a Democratic nation and that equal means equal.

February is Black History Month. This year's theme is "African Americans and Labor" focusing on the invaluable contributions of African Americans in the workforce. I attended a luncheon on MLK, Jr. Day sponsored by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of New Mexico. The guest speaker was Dr. Clayborne Carson. Dr. Carson had, for me, a different and illuminating message. He spoke about, as most who pay tribute do, what Dr. King accomplished in his 39 years. Then Dr. Carson asked us to think about what he might have accomplished in his next 39 years given his vision for the future. A thought provoking question.

The LWV CEO published a press release on January 24th, "**The Democracy Impact of President Trump's First Week Actions**". Read the release [here](#). "**Women Defend Democracy**" is the new programmatic focus for the League in 2025, centering people power and moving our country towards a stronger, multi-racial democracy. Information can be found [here](#).

The 2025 sixty-day Legislative session began at noon on January 21<sup>st</sup>. There are 28 new representatives and senators serving New Mexico. The New Mexico League has determined the following priorities for this session: Voting & Elections & Ethics, Environment, Health Care and Housing. This does not mean that bills in other categories are ignored, they are not. We just must be realistic about resources. As of January 19<sup>th</sup> 125 bills, memorials, and resolutions had been pre-filed. As of January 29<sup>th</sup>, 369 bills, memorials and resolutions had been filed.

To track the NM League activity, go to [LWVNM: Legislative Tracking](#). More detail and the status of legislation can be found on the [Legislation Listing - New Mexico Legislature](#). The *League Legislative reception* will be held on Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup> and *League Day* at the Legislature is Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.

You should have received your second letter about the new membership system. You may also have received an email from LWV asking you to log on and check your information. We know that for some, this is a change to how we've always LWVCNM managed membership. **But it is not a change to what your membership means to us. Be assured we are prepared to help any members who have questions and need assistance.**

I was invited to speak at the January 29<sup>th</sup> New Mexico Black Leadership Council about our current efforts and upcoming initiatives. I focused on the LWV actions, League Judiciary Study, Abolish the Electoral College, LWVNM 2025 Legislative priorities, LWVCNM Immigration and Citizenship information, and education of future and current Voters.

Please **Save the Date** for the following meetings:

- The LWVNM State Convention is April 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> in Santa Fe.
- Our LWVCNM Annual Meeting is May 10<sup>th</sup> in Albuquerque.

As always, feel free to reach out at [president@lwwnm.org](mailto:president@lwwnm.org) or call the office (505) 884-8441 and leave a message for me.

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## Join us for the Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Series



### FEBRUARY EDUCATIONAL MEETING Thursday February 13<sup>th</sup>, at Noon

**WHERE:** In person (members and guests only), Conference room, 6739 Academy Rd. NE, ample parking available; Zoom (members and general public)

**TOPIC:** Abolish the US Electoral College, Elect the President by Direct Popular Vote

**SPEAKER:** Anne Galer, LWVCNM member LWVUS Committee Member

The LWVUS initiative to Abolish the Electoral College (aka, One Person One Vote) was reinvigorated during the June 2024 LWVUS Convention. The first step in this initiative is to educate our members and NM voters. Learn about the history of the Electoral College, how it works, how it disenfranchises voters, what needs to be done, and dispelling myths. There will also be specific information about how the Electoral College works in New Mexico. Were you aware that there have been four presidential elections where the winner won the [Electoral College](#) and lost the popular vote: 2016, 2000, 1888, 1876?

The US Electoral College was created in 1787. It is comprised of 538 electors requiring a 270-vote majority to select the US President and Vice President. The number of Electoral College votes each state has is based on the number of Senators and Representatives for the state. Each state sets their own rules for their Electoral College electors and how they must vote. This system means that not every vote cast is counted and we are not a true democracy when we elect the President and Vice President. Our Speaker, Anne Galer, is a retired diplomat and member of LWVCNM. She is a member of the LWVUS committee to Abolish the electoral College.

#### March LWVCNM Educational Meeting

**Save the Date:** Amanda Lavin, Sunshine Attorney/Legal Director, Foundation for Open Government, has been invited to address the March 13, 2025 Sunshine Month educational meeting.

Ms. Lavin will discuss current and future transparency efforts statewide and recommend how LWVCNM can advocate for such openness from the national to the local level.

**League Days at the Legislature**  
**February 5 & 6, 2025**  
**Please Join Us!**

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**Wednesday, February 5**

Legislative Reception  
La Fonda Hotel  
100 East San Francisco Street, Santa Fe  
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Speaker  
Maggie Toulouse Oliver  
NM Secretary of State

**Thursday, February 6**

10 a.m. - Noon

Program at the NM State Land Office, 310 Old Santa Fe Trail (down the street from the Roundhouse)

**AGENDA**

10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Orientation to League Day

10:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Molly Swank, Executive Director of Common Cause New Mexico  
Modernization of the Legislature and Legislative Salaries

11:15 a.m. - Noon

Stephanie Garcia Richard, New State Land Commissioner  
Increasing Gas and Oil Royalty Rates and Diversification  
of Revenue from State Lands

Noon

Lunch on your own -- we will provide attendees with a list of options.

1:00 p.m.

Meet with legislators as individuals or in groups and attend Committee hearings or House and Senate Sessions

**Please make your own arrangements for staying in Santa Fe.**

El Sendero Inn, 311 Old Santa Fe Trail is 2 blocks from the Roundhouse and reasonably priced.  
The Sage Hotel, 725 Cerrillos Road, is also an option but farther from the Roundhouse.  
La Fonda Hotel is also close by.

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# Immigration News

The League of Women Voters of the United States has had an Immigration Position since 2008. Positions are the foundation for League advocacy. No Position, No Advocacy.

Since taking office on January 20<sup>th</sup>, the President has issued executive orders significantly impacting US Immigration Policy. While your immigration status may not be in question, the new rules may impact you in unforeseen ways at your business, your work, at worship, at school, and in many other places. Anyone may experience or witness an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operation.

The key directives of the President's executive orders are:

- Enhanced Border Security and Enforcement "Protecting the American People Against **Invasion**"\*
- Reevaluation of Birthright Citizenship (Politicians Ted Cruz, Chris Van Hollen, Sheila Cherfilus McCormick, Delia Ramirez and Nikky Haley all have birthright citizenship)  
[birthright citizenship factsheet 241017.pdf](#)
- Enhanced Vetting Procedures with stricter vetting processes for visa applicants
- Changes to Asylum Policies
- Suspension of Refugee Admissions

**\*NOTE The use of the word "Invasion" is a tactic being used to try and expand the power of the President.**

**Immigrants** in the U.S., **regardless of their immigration status**, have certain legal rights protected by the U.S. Constitution and federal laws. Basic Constitutional Rights for All Immigrants:

- **Right to Remain Silent**
- **Right to an Attorney**
- **Right Against Unreasonable Searches**
- **Right to Due Process**
- **Right to Work**

After the current administration **reversed** a federal guideline discouraging the arrest of undocumented immigrants in public places such as houses of worship and schools, The New Mexico Department of Justice issued guidance for houses of worship, public schools, colleges, local law enforcement officers, magistrate and district courts and hospitals. Those guidelines can be found on the [New Mexico Department of Justice website](#).

Resources and guidance are available to help understand what this all means and what legal actions people and organizations can take to prepare for ICE. Here are a few:

- [The New Mexico Immigrant Law Center \(NMILC\)](#) is an excellent resource.
- One page [Know your Rights](#)
- [Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs Resources — City of Albuquerque](#)

Best practices from research, and **not** legal advice: You do not have to answer questions:

- You have the right to remain silent.
- In a public place you do NOT have to show ID or answer questions.
- A warrant MUST be signed by a Judge. An ICE administrative warrant does **not** give ICE the authority to enter private spaces like homes, schools, or workplaces without consent.
- At home you do not have to open your door until ICE provides a signed warrant.
- ICE is only allowed to enter public areas. They cannot enter areas marked private without a warrant signed by a judge.

## LWVCNM BOOK CLUB UPDATES - Special Book Author Event - January 22<sup>nd</sup>

The LWVCNM Book Club kicked off the 2025 season with National Book Award Finalist *Whiskey Tender* by Deborah Jackson Taffa.



*Deborah opened the discussion with a reading from her memoir.*



*Author Deborah Taffa, Starlyn Brown, LWVCNM President, and Jennifer Black, Book & Author Event Coordinator.*



*LWVCNM Members joining the discussion.*

Deborah joined the group in the LWVCNM Conference Room for a lively and thoughtful discussion, followed by a potluck dinner.

If you were not able to join us, we highly recommend reading Deborah's moving memoir, capturing her struggles to reconcile her tribal history with the concept of upward mobility and how her family must come together when tragedy strikes.

## LWVCNM Book Club

### What's Up Next?

#### Save-the-Date • Wednesday, March 26

The **LWVCNM Book Club** meets the 4th Wednesday of each odd-numbered month.  
Join us for the March session.

New members are always welcome! If you are not able to complete a book before the session, now worries...join a session and complete the book at your convenience. Great conversation, light snacks, and a way to better get to know LWVCNM members.

The group selected the following title for the March meeting:

**Date:** Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>  
**Time:** TBD  
**Location:** TBD  
**Title:** *Hell If We Don't Change Our Ways: A Memoir by Brittany Means*

In this memoir, Albuquerque resident Brittany Means shares traumatic childhood experiences with homelessness and family instability. Ms. Means earned an MFA from the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa. She won the 2024 Indiana Authors Award for this memoir; and People magazine picked it among the Best Books Fall 2023. More details to follow.

Contact Janet at 505-401-2052 for questions.

## Help Plan the 2025 LWVNM State Convention!

Members throughout the state are needed to help plan and host the 2025 LWVNM State Convention to be held at **The Lodge in Santa Fe, Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, the 27<sup>th</sup>.**

Ideas are needed for Reception, Speaker, and more!

Interested members should contact Debbie Helper: [lwsfc@gmail.com](mailto:lwsfc@gmail.com)

The 2025 update to LWVCNM's guide:

### **Who's Who - A Political Directory for Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties**

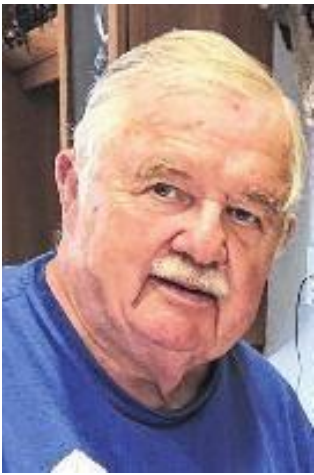
is now available on our website.

It's a comprehensive resource with contact information for individuals who serve in federal, state, county and local offices.

Copies are available in the League office and in local libraries.

Thanks to Ashley Benning for her great work on this project!

## In Remembrance of Ken Lersten



LWVCNM regrets the loss of Ken Lersten, member and husband to Sonia Lersten, member since 2014, serving both on the LWVCNM Board and volunteering for many LWV efforts.

Kenneth (Ken) Carl Lersten, 86, passed away peacefully on November 14, 2024. Ken was born on July 24, 1938, in Chicago to Einar and Elvira Lersten, immigrants to the United States from Varmland Province in Sweden. He was a devoted son, husband, and father who gave of himself to others and the community. He is survived by his loving wife of 61 years, League member Sonia Lersten, his children Thomas Lersten and Kristina Lersten Sakamoto, and his eight grandchildren.

In his earlier years, Ken earned a Bachelor of Arts from Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, and then earned both a Master of Arts degree and a Doctor of Education degree from the University of California, Berkeley. He subsequently became a professor of anatomy and physiology at the University of Southern California (USC), before leaving congested Los Angeles in 1971 to become a professor at the University of New Mexico, where he and Sonia began a love affair with Albuquerque and the Desert Southwest. Nonetheless, Ken remained a diehard Trojans fan the rest of his life. Seeking a professional change and because he loved teaching, Ken became a Certified Financial Planner and investment broker for about 44 years helping clients achieve financial independence, most recently with Wells Fargo Advisors.

Ken epitomized the student-athlete, serving as captain of both Augustana's football and baseball teams, setting school records. Following college, he discovered basketball served as his true passion, and he remained active in the sport into his 60s, playing competitively in the NM Senior Olympics. For years he volunteered, kept active in his church life assuming leadership positions, and served Albuquerque as a member of both the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs.

As a first-generation Swedish-American, Ken remained proud of his heritage his entire life and shared it abundantly with others. Along with his wife, Sonia, also a first-generation Swede, they founded the Scandinavian Club of Albuquerque in 1973 to promote Nordic culture and customs, which continues to this day.

## ***LWVCNM BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

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Starlyn Brown

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Karen Wentworth

***Volunteer Coordinator:***  
Linda Miller

If you need help with Zoom,  
please reach out to Zoom host, Linda Miller,  
lmiller@unm.edu

Please submit your articles for the monthly Voter by  
the 15th of each month to Michal Mudd at:  
[VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com](mailto:VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com)

## ***LWVCNM CALENDAR***

**February 5th (Wednesday)**  
**League Legislative reception**  
**See announcement details p. 3**

**February 6th (Thursday)**  
**League Day at the Legislature**  
**See announcement details p. 3**

**February 12th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm**  
**LWVCNM Board Meeting, ZOOM until further notice. All members welcome.**

**February 13th (Thursday) 12 Noon**  
**LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting**  
**In person and ZOOM**  
**Topic:** LWVUS Moonshot Goal: Abolition of the US Electoral College  
**Speaker:** Anne Galer, LWVCNM member and LWVUS Committee Member

**March 5th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm**  
**LWVCNM Board Meeting, ZOOM until further notice. All members welcome.**

**March 13th (Thursday) 12 Noon**  
**LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting**  
**In person and ZOOM**  
**Topic:** Current and future transparency efforts statewide honoring Sunshine Month  
**Speaker:** Amanda Lavin, Sunshine Attorney/Legal Director, Foundation for Open Government

**March 22<sup>nd</sup> (Saturday)**  
**End of New Mexico Legislative Session**

**March 26<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)**  
**LWVCNM Book Club**  
***Hell If We Don't Change Our Ways: A Memoir***  
**by Brittany Means**





## Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting

16 December 2024/ 6 January 2025

Mary Mulvany/Janet Kirkpatrick

All nine councilors were present at the 16 Dec and 6 Jan meetings. Councilors: Louie Sanchez – District 1, Joaquin Baca – District 2, Klarissa Peña – District 3, Brook Bassan – District 4, Dan Lewis – District 5, Nichole Rogers – District 6, Tammy Fiebelkorn – District 7, Dan Champine – District 8, Renée Grout-District 9.

Councilor Bassan and Councilor Peña were unanimously elected as calendar year 2025 President and Vice-president respectively.

### General Information:

Both meetings began at 5pm and adjourned after midnight due to a full agenda and the number of people who signed up for public comment. Public comment was limited to one minute per person at both meetings.

### Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) Amendment

At the 6 Jan meeting Councilors Baca and Lewis proposed an Amendment to the IDO, [O-24-69](#). The amendment was introduced at the 16 Dec council meeting but did not receive consideration in any applicable committee. This legislation changes the definition of who has standing to mount an appeal, removes failure to notify neighborhood associations as grounds for remand or reversal of appeal, requires an appellant who loses an appeal to pay the appellee's legal fees, and increases height and density restrictions along major transit corridors (Central, 4<sup>th</sup> St.).

Over 60 people provided comment to this amendment. Comments were limited to one minute. Thirty-five people spoke in opposition, citing a lack of transparency and intentional limitation of public engagement, lack of consideration at the committee level, and the weaponization of attorney's fees as a means to discourage appeal.

Twenty-six people spoke in favor of the amendment, stating the change would increase housing supply, remove obstacles to growth such as frivolous appeals, and contribute to a walkability.

The amendment passed by a vote of seven in favor (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Fiebelkorn, Grout, Lewis, Rogers) and two opposed (Peña, Sanchez). It was sent to the mayor on 10 Jan.

### Housing

Joseph Montoya of Health, Housing and Homelessness, Mikaela Renz-Whitmore of Planning, and Kendra Montanari of Transportation shared a Housing Needs Assessment presentation at the 16 Dec meeting. The presentation stated there is a shortage of over 18,000 units that need the highest subsidies to be affordable. Additionally, over 80% of workers in the region cannot afford the median home price at median earnings. And 39% of workers cannot afford the median rent at median earnings. See the entire report at the 4:00 mark of the [ABQ City Council Recording 12.16.24](#).

The City Council unanimously passed the **Manufactured Home Community Stability and Empowerment Ordinance** [O-24-52](#) at the 12 Dec meeting. This ordinance requires the owner of a manufactured home park to notify residences of an intent to sell and when an offer is received. This provides the community members with an opportunity to organize and purchase the property. Signed by the mayor on 29 Dec.

### Homelessness

Proposed by Councilor Grout at the 16 Dec meeting, [O-24-56](#) **amends the Parks Ordinance** to prohibit erection of tents, the use of shopping carts, the leaving of trash, or possession of glass containers in public parks. This ordinance passed by a vote of six in favor (Baca, Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis,

Sanchez) and three opposed (Fiebelkorn, Peña, Rogers). The mayor neither signed nor vetoed this bill. Lacking a veto, the ordinance is enacted.

Proposed by Councilor Grout at the 16 Dec meeting, [O-24-58](#), the **Public Camping Ordinance**, makes it unlawful to camp or maintain an encampment in any publicly owned area. The ordinance passed by a vote of five in favor (Bassan, Champine, Grout, Lewis, Sanchez) and four opposed (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Peña, Rogers). The mayor neither signed nor vetoed this bill. Lacking a veto, the ordinance is enacted.

## **MISC**

[O-24-59](#), **Amending the Uniform Housing Code to Require Cooling Systems**, was proposed by Councilor Fiebelkorn at the 16 Dec meeting. The ordinance requires that every dwelling be provided with cooling facilities. The ordinance passed by a vote of five in favor (Baca, Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Peña, Rogers) to four (Champine, Grout, Lewis, Sanchez). The mayor signed it on 29 Dec.

[O-24-61](#), **Downtown Vacant Premises Ordinance**, was proposed by Councilor Baca at the 6 Jan meeting. The ordinance requires annual registration and inspection of vacant buildings in the downtown area. The annual registration fee ranges from \$1k-\$5k. Non compliance results in a financial penalty. The ordinance passed by a vote of seven in favor (Baca, Bassan, Fiebelkorn, Grout, Lewis, Peña, Rogers) and two opposed (Champine, Sanchez).



## **Observer Corps Report – Bernalillo County Commission January 2025 Karen Wentworth**

### **Bernalillo County Commission Focused on Housing, Property Taxes**

Present: Eric Olivas (chair), Adriann Barboa (vice chair), Barbara Baca, Walt Benson, Frank Baca

The Bernalillo County Commission passed a low-income property tax rebate bill that would allow property owners with an income of \$24,000 a year or less to apply for a \$350 rebate on their property tax. There are more than 64,000 people living in the county that meet the income criteria, but commissioners do not know how many of those residents' own property.

The commission also passed a series of project revenue bonds for rehabilitation of affordable income housing at the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. The projects include:

- \$40 million – for acquisition and rehabilitation of Villa Hermosa, a complex of 288 apartments at 2600 Arericare Ct. NW by Albuquerque Leased Housing Associate LLP.
- \$26 million – for acquisition and rehabilitation of Desert Willow apartments, a complex of 224 affordable housing units at 8901 Jefferson St. NE.
- \$33.5 million – for acquisition and rehabilitation of 160 Section 8 housing units at St. Anthony's Plaza, 1750 Indian School Road NW.

The projects continue a long standing tradition in Bernalillo County of building and maintaining affordable housing throughout the community.

In another action, the commission also voted to allow secondary dwelling units on all land within the county zoned for agriculture or single-family residential housing. These actions are in line with the Central New Mexico Leagues position on housing which state "Local government has primary

responsibility for making available, facilitating, and coordinating provision of affordable, decent and safe housing using federal, state, county or city funds.”

In one unusual vote, the commission approved one-time grants to three small behavioral health service providers who have budgets of less than \$500,000. The commission had no information about the projects or what the money would be used for. The total amount available for the projects was more than \$2 million but it was unclear how much each applicant would receive.



## **Sandoval County Commission regular meeting**

**January 8, 2025**

**Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)**

Present: Michael Meek (Chair), Jordan Juarez (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Jon Herr

### **Description of Issues Relevant to the League**

No agenda items were taken up for which the League has a policy position.

### **Additional Comments**

None.

### **Sandoval County Commission Website**

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



## **Middle Rio Grande Housing Commission (MRGHC)**

**Affordable Housing Report**

**January 2025**

The MRGHC met at 3:00 pm, Thursday, December 19, 2024 at the MRCOG Board Room.

These MRGHC commissioners were present at the meeting: Talia Friedman, Dan Majewski, Lawrence Rael, and Steve Anaya. Commissioner Ian Robertson was absent.

Also in attendance was County Commissioner Barbara Baca and County Manager Cindy Chavez from Bernalillo County.

Agenda Item Updates: The minutes for November 14 and November 25 were reviewed and approved. The Chair presented for Action an MOU between MRGHC and Bernalillo County to adhere to quarterly reporting requirements for the County's \$500,000 appropriation to MRGHC. A similar MOU will be drafted between MRGHC and the City of Albuquerque for their \$500,000 appropriation which will be presented for action at the January meeting.

MRGHC Chair Friedman said that two applicants for the MRGHC Executive Director position were interviewed in November. She stated that an offer of employment was extended to one of the candidates, however, the candidate's current employer countered that offer with a raise. The candidate

therefore declined the MRGHC offer. The Executive Director position will thus be posted again to receive new applications.

The MRGHC members received a presentation on the Affordable Housing Act (AHA) by Joseph Montoya, Deputy Director of Housing at the City of Albuquerque. The presentation focused on the AHA, the anti-donation clause of the New Mexico State Constitution and their impact on the creation of affordable housing. The AHA allows authorized entities (municipalities, counties, State of New Mexico or school districts) to donate or make contributions towards acquisition, development, financing, operating and managing affordable housing. By subsidizing various housing development costs these donations allow housing projects to have lower rents and thus become more affordable to low to moderate income populations. MFA/Housing New Mexico administers the AHA by reviewing all applications for compliance with the AHA; ensures that entities are 'qualifying grantees'; and, that an open RFP (Request for Proposals) or NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability) process is followed by the granting entity.

MRGHC members were briefed regarding Bernalillo County's 2025 NM Legislative priorities and funding requests that prioritized two housing related items: 1) support a request of \$500 million to the NM Housing Trust Fund with a 20% set aside for local governments to produce and/or rehabilitate affordable housing; and, 2) the MRGHC request for \$100 million for affordable housing in all four quadrants of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County to fund the development of 2,000 new housing units and the rehabilitation of 800 housing units.

The next MRGHC meeting date will be Thursday, January 23, 2025 @ 3pm at MRCOG Board room.

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## Volunteer Opportunities

*Because Democracy is not a Spectator Sport....*

We need your skills, your enthusiasm, and your commitment to the myriad of projects always underway. From simple clerical tasks to grass roots advocacy, ongoing or project-by project, we can fit your interests to a volunteer job. Expanding our volunteer base is a top priority of LWVCNM.



**How to Find Out More About Volunteering? It's easy! Contact us at :**

**(505) 884-8441** or [lwvcnoffice@gmail.com](mailto:lwvcnoffice@gmail.com) Leave a message with your name/phone number and expressing your interest in finding out more about volunteering. We'll contact you to match your interests/skills with a volunteer position, explain tasks involved, review time commitment for various positions, and offer training where needed.



**6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124  
Albuquerque, NM 87109**

**The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization is a nonpartisan political organization, that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy by education and advocacy.**

