

Action and Advocacy Committee 2023 - 2024 Annual Report
League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County

This past year has been one of a lot of watchful waiting. Local governments have moved slowly with some deliberation on several subjects we have been following, but were unable to comment because of lack of information or because projects were in progress. We met several times with City Manager John Blair regarding the topics below; the mayor joined us a few times.

Specifically, in the city we have been watching several land use developments, especially the Midtown project and Las Estrellas. We have been concerned about the future governance of Midtown as a Metropolitan Redevelopment District, and hope to have two or three of the city's officials in charge of the project come talk to the League in the coming months. In Las Estrellas, we watched and reported on the city's two offerings, and we will continue to monitor how they will play out for local developers, financial entities, and related firms. We are watching for results related to the affordable housing goals the governing body has set.

We have followed the city's belated audits and continue to watch for reports to the Finance Committee and the Governing Body.

We have also watched for updates on the possible disposition of the Soldiers' Monument, including questioning City Manager Blair and Mayor Webber. When we see an opportunity to make a new recommendation (we have commented publicly in past years), we will do so, but our contacts in the governing body are advising that we not hold our breath.

We have had a regular observer of the Santa Fe Public Schools Board of Education for several years, and this year we have gained observers for the meetings of the Board of County Commissioners and the Santa Fe Community College Board. Their reports spark in-depth discussion at our meetings and will provide opportunities for action and advocacy in the future. Currently we are watching the BCC for short-term rental legislation, among other related land use issues. We are keeping informed about the public schools calendar and capital investment decisions, including information technology, and we are following the Community College policy makers' consideration of pay and curriculum issues.

Once in a while we receive requests for attention or help that are outside our scope. For example, here is a note of interest from our meeting last September: *"Hannah reported on a call she received from a resident of the Las Soleras senior independent-living complex (owned by Spectrum Retirement). She was referred to the League by State Senator Liz Stefanics. The resident has multiple complaints about the facility that have not been addressed by management. Members agreed that this is not an issue that the League can deal with."* Given the tragic death recently of a Las Soleras resident, we now know that there was validity to the concern. Several of our members are also members of the LWVSFC Community Health Committee, and we will watch for ways the League can encourage local governments to perform their oversight duties better.