



NEW MEXICO WATER & WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION

NMWWA Executive Board Meeting

P.O. Box 819
Española, NM 87532

November 14, 2025
Via Teams Online

Phone: (505) 753-8840
www.nmwwa.org

Javier Gutierrez, Las Cruces
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Past-President, 505-353-6902

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Director, 505-463-8072

Gene Salazar, Espanola
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Rosabelle Martinez, Espanola
Executive Manager, 505-753-8840

The meeting of the NM Water & Wastewater Association was called to order on November 14, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. by President Craig Byers.

Roll was called, and attending the meeting were: Craig Byers, Javier Gutierrez, Martin Lopez, Lyman Waller, Gene Salazar, Alejandro Salas, Terry Mount, Jake Martinez, Mike Lopez, and Rose Martinez.

Gene Salazar made a motion to accept the minutes of the last Executive Board meeting. Motion seconded by Lyman Waller; motion carried.

President's Report: Craig Byers proposed to create an instructor evaluation form to collect recommendations from instructors for school improvement. An awards committee was established for various awards with volunteers to participate which included: Martin Lopez, Javier Gutierrez, Mike Lopez and Terry Mount who excluded herself from the Art Torrez award. The evaluation and salary for Rose Martinez was discussed, leading to a motion for a pay increase recommendation of 3%. A motion was made by Lyman Waller to accept Rose's evaluation and an increase of 3% beginning on the first payroll of 2026. Motion seconded by Javier Gutierrez; motion carried.

Financial Report: Given by Rose Martinez (see the attachment), a motion to accept the financial report as given was made by Martin Lopez, seconded by Javier Gutierrez. Motion carried.

Finance Committee Update: Terry Mount suggested changing the name of "finance committee" to "policies and procedures committee" or "task force". She inquired if the Executive Board would like to continue moving forward with policies and procedures and have the committee meet at another meeting and go over them and fix what might have been missed such as the performance evaluation. The committee may come back in eighteen months and see where there may have been an oversight, add or remove and make changes and get them finished now and approved. Byers agreed to have the policies and procedures completed and then voted on in January. Terry stated she will go in and clean it up and formatted and sent out the finance committee for review.

A Vote is to be passed on the next Executive board meeting regarding virtual cards, flowers or monies to members or family that have passed away and money to be put aside for emergencies or retirements.

GHK & Max Summerlot Tour Committee update: Victor Gonzales and Andres Montoya will be touring the central and northern part of the State and Shawn Zachary will be touring the southern part. Javier Gutierrez suggested rather than to have multiple groups touring, there should be one consistent touring committee touring the whole state. Terry Mount agreed by stating it adds consistency across all the evaluations and discussions taking place.

Executive Manager's Report: Rose Martinez reported an unethical issue at between instructors which prompted to have individuals sign in-in every class. We had 136 attendees at the Central School and nine exhibitors. The 2026 Annual Conference is set up with Hotel Encanto and schedule is in the process with 40 registered to attend and 12 exhibitors so far. Fresh new changes were made to the meet and greet in terms of the entertainment.

The Ballot is complete and ready for approval as follows: Victor Gonzales for President-Elect, Alyssa Chaves for Vice-President, Andres Montoya, Steven LaBolt, Cynthia Arnold and Robert Hays running for Director. Gene Salazar as Secretary Treasurer.

A motion was made to accept the Ballot as presented. A motion was made by Martin Lopez and seconded by Mike Lopez; motion carried.

A quote was presented from Las Cruces Convention Center to host possible future annual schools. The total cost without coffee breaks, banquet and meet and greet would be \$16, 731.00, the cost of the Hotel Encanto usually runs \$37, 100.00. Rose will contact the Convention Center again and request a total quote amount to include the coffee breaks and/or the banquet and meet and greet. A suggestion was made to contact Hotel Encanto for breaks on the cost of rooms if we decide to go to the Convention Center along with referencing the cost of conducting only the banquet and meet and greet with the Hotel. A suggestion was also made to tour the convention center and surrounding Hotels in January for future reference.

Gene Salazar was issued a bank debit card for emergency situations. Marvin Martinez and Rose were able to put together a supplementary workshop in Las Vegas with at least ten people attending on November 19-20 2025. A calendar of events is now on the website on the homepage. Pointers for instruction at the schools were ordered at instructor's requests.

Nomination Update: Six GHK nominations have been submitted, two for the Max Summerlot, eight outstanding operators of the year, one section president award, three Ted Martinez

lifetimes, one for the Caroline Sanchez achievement, one for the Arthur Torrez award, and one recipient for the Terry Mount scholarship as of now.

Section President's Report:

NE: Jake reported \$2,503.96 in the checking account, \$6,032.05 in the savings. They just completed their workshop in October with around 22 people attending. They had a lot of on hands training and were able to pick up membership.

SW: Mike reported \$16,692.98 in the checking account and \$1,187.65 in the savings. They just completed their monthly training yesterday with around 15 people attending. They had 67 attend their workshop and next year they will have a meet and greet and increase vendors from 6 to 10.

CT: Craig reported \$1,969.96 in the checking account and \$5,629.88 in the savings. They conducted their workshop on November 5-6th 2025 with 19 attendees. They held the workshop at the Forestation in Los Lunas. Their last meeting will be in December 16, 2025 and will be giving away AWWA manuals.

NW: No Report

SE: No Report

WC: No Report

NMED Report: Brian Bennon introduced himself, he is the manager of the Utility Operator Certification Program. Brian gave updates for the Utility Operator Certification Program. There are three on their staff right now which includes Carlos Gonzales and Veronica Serrano. They are recruiting for a UOCP team lead, two coordinator positions for the Santa Fe location and a training and outreach coordinator position. They are working on rebuilding UOCP process. Statistics given from July through September were as follows:

100% of the operator certification applications submitted were reviewed and processed. 236 water wastewater certifications were renewed. 273 water wastewater exam applications were processed. 237 water and wastewater exams taken and have a composite passing rate of 44.7%. And 106 overall total new certifications were issued.

Brian mentioned they are available to be scheduled to teach on operator certification and training on the Certemy platform.

They began stakeholder workforce pipeline development discussions, exploring ways they can improve the water workforce industry, the pipeline coming into the water industry. They are working on the need-to-know criteria and expand it to where it's broken out for each individual type of certification and currently have 22 different types of certifications, 11 in drinking water, 11 in wastewater, on the current need-to-know criteria documents, there are only two. There's just one for drinking water and one for wastewater. The idea is to take those need-to-know criteria documents and to reformat them such that there's one need-to-know criteria for each individual type of certification. They are hoping to have all 22 need-to-know criteria documents in draft form ready for review at the Utility Operator Certification Advisory Board meeting in January. In addition, they are looking at evaluating score data and looking at trying to identify gaps. They are looking for trends in the areas, content areas that are most frequently missed on the exams. And will be working with the exam platform provider in looking into that data. These are the ideas within the next 6 months and will be sharing such general trends information with training providers and generally with operators as well.

They are starting to work on a rule revision and reviewing the draft plan and hope to be done by 2027 which includes issues they will try to address such as facility supervision and incorporating the concept of operator in responsible charge, creating an operator and trainee regulation, looking at the utility operator certification annual fee structure, and looking at the differences between enforcement versus a renewal cycle, looking at the difference between operator and training versus the lack of a facility having a lack of a certified operator along with examining the operator training and experience requirements, facility classification, types of certification requirements, and transition. They will be looking at enforcement related to roles such as the role of facility owners, the role of operators, and the role of operators in direct and responsible charge.

Brian Bennon stated if there are any questions from operators to call and/or email, they are answering questions and walking people through Certemy. Brian stated the conversion and formula sheets provided on the NMED website are standardized and are offered to the operators at the testing centers.

DACC Report: Alejandro Salas reported they have hired a laboratory technician by the name of Kaylee Garland. She brings research experience from New Mexico State University, has her master's in chemical engineering and undergraduate degree in chemical engineering. They

posted for the nine-month position and going through interviews right now. They have a good selection of candidates to choose from. Some bringing operator experience, one of the candidates is a PhD, another candidate a master's in civil engineering. They have been collaborating with NMED and the other colleges to have a more uniform curriculum. Alejandro has been working on getting the laboratory certified for drinking water analysis. They had a deadline of about April of next year to submit the application to be certified. There was an emergency procurement that happened earlier this year that they were not aware of so it looks like they are going to have to wait for some time to get on that list again. The contract opens every four years and hopes that they can get in on the next go-around, but for now, they are working on becoming state certified and they will be able to analyze for kind of the emergency samples. DACC has a few research projects going on with salinity removal and some other very interesting research projects. He mentioned 3 scholarships available if anyone is interested, email him.

Other Business: Lyman Waller reported this is his last Executive board meeting and the Annual school would be his last time teaching due to retiring. Martin Lopez also expressed it is his last meeting as well and it's been a pleasure to be a part of NMWWA the last three years.

The next NMWWA Executive board meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2026 at 6:00 pm at the Hotel Encanto, downstairs in-person.

A motion was made by Javier Gutierrez to adjourn NMWWA Executive board meeting. Motion seconded by Lyman Waller; motion carried. The NMWWA Executive board meeting adjourned at 12:20 pm.