

Meeting Minutes

NMPRC Nominating Committee Meeting

Date: October 9, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

Committee Members Present:

- Rikki Seguin (Chair)
- Alonzo Baldonado
- Cydney Beadles
- William Brancard
- Denise Ramonas
- Ron Lovato

PRC Staff Present:

- Chief of Staff: Cholla Khoury
- IT: Phil Bolton
- Zoom Administrator/Public Information Officer: Patrick Rodriguez
- Project Manager: Jordan Gutierrez

Department of Justice Counsel:

- Kristin Hovie

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Rikki Seguin called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Member Catherine Nicolaou was absent.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and State Salute

The committee observed the Pledge of Allegiance and State Salute.

3. Consideration and Approval of Agenda

Chair Seguin noted that under item six, the committee had already approved the minutes for 6a and 6b, recommending they be struck from the agenda, and item 6c be renamed 6a.

Motion to approve the agenda changes made by Chair Seguin. **Second Motion** by Cydney Beadles. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the amended agenda made by Denise Ramonas. **Second Motion** by Cydney Beadles. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

- 1 individual online was ready to give a public comment.
- **Camilla Feibelman**, Director of Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter, thanked the committee and staff for ensuring a transparent process and highlighted the importance of matching New Mexico's energy future with the urgent impacts of climate change. She referenced the state's progress with renewable battery storage and emphasized the need for continued focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, even though this is not currently mandated by the PRC.

5. Briefing by New Mexico Department of Justice

Kristin Hovie, from the Department of Justice, provided a briefing on the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and IPRA (Inspection of Public Records Act). Key points included:

- OMA requires public bodies to conduct their business openly, with specific notice and quorum requirements.
- Committee members attending remotely must identify themselves before speaking, and virtual public comments must be authorized by the body.
- IPRA is another transparency law that requires public records to be available for inspection. Hovie discussed exceptions and timelines related to IPRA requests.

Committee members, including Cydney Beadles and William Brancard, posed questions about rolling quorums and document retention. Hovie clarified that a rolling quorum (where a majority of the committee discusses public business through separate conversations) is prohibited. Additionally, any documents related to public business held by committee members are subject to IPRA.

Chair Seguin asked for updates on two issues: political affiliation changes and the 10-year qualification metric. Hovie stated there is no official DOJ opinion on either matter. For the 10-year metric, an official opinion would require a formal request under NMSA 1978 Section 8-52D, but the committee could rely on its own interpretation. Regarding political affiliation, an AG opinion suggests that party affiliation is set at the time of appointment. Hovie recommended discussing these issues during candidate interviews and informing the governor.

Mr. Baldonado suggested the legislature might revisit and refine the statute, recommending the committee consider a future motion for an official opinion.

6. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The September 9, 2024, minutes were reviewed. Several edits were proposed, including:

- Correcting the date in the first line from "December 2, 2023" to "December 2, 2022."

- Clarifying that the motion made by Ms. Ramonas involved sending questionnaires, not applications, to 13 individuals.
- Reflecting that public comment was received from Camilla Feibelman of the Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter after the public comment period had officially closed.
- Striking item 9 (Action Items) from the minutes as they were considered “homework” tasks, not part of the official record.

A **motion** was made by Denise Ramonas to approve the minutes with the proposed changes. The **motion was seconded** by Alonzo Baldonado and passed unanimously.

7. Adoption of Open Meetings Act Resolution

The committee discussed adopting the shorter version of the OMA resolution as recommended by the Department of Justice. Minor amendments were proposed, including adding email address for ADA compliance.

A **motion** to approve the OMA resolution as amended was made by William Brancard and **seconded** by Denise Ramonas. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Announcements

There were no new announcements from committee members.

9. Discussion and/or Potential Action Items Related to Submitted Questionnaires

The committee discussed the submitted questionnaires and deliberated on which candidates to invite for interviews. After extensive discussion, the committee decided to move forward with six candidates, with the possibility of adding a seventh pending further clarification. The selected candidates were:

1. Colin Walcavich
2. Debra Hicks (pending confirmation of full-time commitment)
3. Flavious Smith
4. Greg Nibert
5. James Ellison
6. Stephen Meyer
7. Blessing Chukwu

A **motion** to invite these candidates for interviews was made by Denise Ramonas and **seconded** by William Brancard. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Cydney Beadles. **Second Motion** by Alonzo Baldonado. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at **11:45 a.m.**

