

February 1, 2009
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EL VALLE NEWS

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BOARD MEMBERS BARELA AND ROMERO RE-ELECTED

On January 13, 2009 Board Member Elections were held, as required by New Mexico State Law. Two candidates, both incumbents, vied for the two positions that were open. The Board of Directors canvassed the election results at its regular meeting on January 14, 2009 and accepted the results of the election. At the same meeting each of the newly elected board members were sworn into office. Officer elections were held on the January 14th meeting. The officers for 2009 are: Chairman: Gabriel J. Romero, Vice-Chairman: F.R. Bob Romero, Secretary: Meliton Struck, Treasurer: Mario Barela; Member at Large: Andrew Chavez.

EL VALLE'S 2008 CONSTRUCTION SEASON CREATED NUMEROUS JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

During 2008, El Valle constructed three new phases of sewer line comprising approximately 2 new miles of line and providing sewer service to an estimated 50 new customers. In itself, these new phases are positive for the community as a whole because of the effect of protection of the groundwater. In addition, all of the construction projects provided jobs and other benefits to the local economy.

The three new Phases, 1E (Morada Road), 2A (Tom Holder Road) and 7B (UNM-Taos) were constructed by three different contractors, two from the Taos area and one from Albuquerque. More than 30 workers were employed on these three projects, most of whom reside in the Taos area. In addition to the employment offered on these projects, the contractors purchased supplies and materials from local vendors. They also paid local gross receipts taxes, which benefits local governmental activities.

The local economy is positively affected in the short and long terms when new infrastructure, such as that constructed by El Valle, is implemented.

The economy benefits in the short-term because local workers are employed and local products are purchased, bringing more money into the economy to circulate locally.

In the long-term, the new infrastructure creates jobs in maintaining, administering and repairing the permanent utilities.

THE 2009 NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE SESSION OPENED ON JANUARY 20TH. EL VALLE IS SEEKING ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO BUILD PHASE 2B FROM THE LEGISLATURE. IF YOU WISH TO SUPPORT THESE EFFORTS, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS:

Representative Roberto "Bobby"

Gonzales – (505) 986-4425

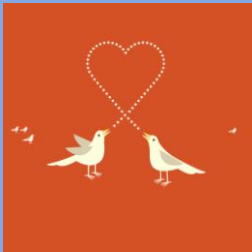
Representative Nick Salazar - (505)986-4433

Senator Carlos Cisneros – (505)986-4365

Senator Phil Griego (505) 986-4861.

"Sin agua no hay vida."

*"Without water, there is no life."**



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Gabriel Romero, Chairman**
- **F.R. Bob Romero, Vice-Chairman**
- **Meliton Struck, Secretary**
- **Mario Barela, Treasurer**
- **Andrew Chavez, Member at Large**
- **Alipio Mondragon – Non-voting Member**

DOMESTIC WELLS OR A PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM?

By F.R. Bob Romero

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STAFF

- Sarah C. Backus, Director
- Pat Sanchez, Office Manager
- Melene Montano, Administrative Assistant

UP-COMING BOARD MEETINGS

February 11, 2009
March 11, 2009
April 8, 2009

All meetings are held at the District Office located at 209E Camino de la Merced, Taos at 4:00 p.m. Meetings may be rescheduled by the Board. Call 751-1700 for up-to-date information.

Interested individuals are encouraged to attend.

The office will be closed on February 16, 2009 for Presidents' Day.

El Valle's Website

www.elvalledelosranchos.org

This article is the fourth in a four-part series intended to clarify and simplify our local water needs and uses.

El Valle de los Ranchos Water & Sanitation District is a quasi-governmental entity that was established in 1979. Since the late 1990's the District has actively pursued funding and has now constructed approximately 16 miles of sewer lines in the Ranchos area. Sewer service has been a priority because ground water in the District's area has experienced some contamination due to the density of homes and septic tanks.

The second component of the mission of El Valle Water and Sanitation District is to establish a public water system in the district. Currently most households in the area depend on private wells for their water needs. A permit to drill a private water well can be secured from the New Mexico office of the State Engineer relatively easily. However, every time a new well is drilled, essentially another straw is being stuck into ground water, thereby further depleting the water aquifers. Furthermore, it is not cost effective for every household to drill and maintain its own well.

Moreover, the State Engineer's authority to issue private well permits, without determining the well's impact on the water supply, has been challenged and it is conceivable that private well permits will be limited or restricted in the future.

The benefits of a safe and efficient public water system is that it serves all members and monitors and maintains water supply and safety standards. The challenge to build a public water system, though, is immense. First, water rights have to be secured by the District. Second, a public well and delivery system must be constructed. All of this requires time, effort, planning and public funding. In light of these obstacles, the Board and Staff of El Valle have entered into discussions with some of the local Mutual Water Domestics in the District and the Town of Taos to either purchase or lease water rights or purchase water from these entities. This approach could eliminate or bypass costly and difficult steps and allow El Valle to expedite the establishment of a water delivery system. The objective is to avoid duplication of efforts and to combine limited resources in order to serve the water needs of the households in the district. In essence, the District wants to focus on collaboration and cooperation in concert with a true Regional Water Plan and a regional water system in the Taos Valley.

Abeyta Engineering, Inc. Awarded 4-year Engineering Contract

On November 24, 2008, El Valle opened sealed proposals from Engineering Firms to provide general engineering services to the District. Two proposals from separate engineering firms were considered by the selection team. The selection team unanimously recommended that Abeyta Engineering, Inc. (AEI) be awarded the contract. The Board of Directors adopted this recommendation at a Special Meeting held on November 25, 2008. AEI has provided engineering services to the District for the past 10 years.