

Michelle Lujan Grisham

Governor

Dylan K. Lange

Director

Cynthia Sandoval

Deputy Director



State Personnel Board

Sandra D. Lopez, *Chair*

Carol A. Parker, *Vice Chair*

Kari Fresquez, *Member*

L. Teresa Padilla, *Member*

Fred Radosevich, *Member*

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**State Personnel Board Meeting
Willie Ortiz Building
2600 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM
Friday, April 17, 2026 – 9:00 AM
MINUTES**

Chair Lopez called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Director Lange led the Pledge of Allegiance and called roll - a quorum was established with the following members present: Sandra Lopez, Carol Parker, L. Teresa Padilla, Kari Fresquez and Fred Radosevich.

Call for Public Comment – Denise Forlizzi, SPO board administrator, advised that no requests for public comment had been received.

Vice Chair Parker moved approval of the agenda, Member Fresquez seconded; Director Lange called roll; agenda adopted.

Vice Chair Parker moved approval of February 6, 2026 minutes; Member Padilla seconded; roll call; minutes approved as written.

FY27 Budget Request

Jaime Trujillo, SPO Administrative Services Director, requested approval for the FY27 budget to be submitted by the May 1, 2026 due date. Trujillo gave an overview of the proposed budget of \$5.192K, a \$232K increase over FY26. Most of the increase in expenditures is due to projected increases in employee health care costs and employee liability insurance premiums. Trujillo noted that 92 percent of the budget is dedicated to personal services and benefits for staff.

Vice Chair Parker asked about the GRO fund appropriation and if the staff hired with those funds are considered temporary employees.

Trujillo said if we demonstrate fiscal prudence of the funds, they will be added to the operating budget in FY29. So far, we are demonstrating that.

Chair Lopez mentioned the reversion for this year saying Trujillo has done an excellent job in managing the budget, reverting just \$37K.

Trujillo said it is a fine line to utilize the allocation wisely supporting the agency goals and directives.

Director Lange added that the numbers reflect the HR Services to the smaller agencies, and we are now asking for payment up front or on a quarterly basis to better manage the flow of those payments.

Vice Chair Parker moved to approve the FY27 budget; Member Radosevich seconded; roll call; motion carried.

Family Assistance Analyst Reevaluation Study

Alyssa Ashbacher, SPO Senior Comp & Class Analyst, requested approval.

Vice Chair Parker asked about the areas and how those positions are apportioned.

Health Care Authority, Acting Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Niki Kozlowski replied that the work is done state-wide face to face in call centers and online portal.

Parker asked how do these analysts interact with other support agencies?

Kozlowski said they are active in all communities and state agencies to better coordinate efforts.

Member Fresquez moved to approve the Family Assistance Analyst Reevaluation Study; Member Padilla seconded; roll call; motion carried.

Child Support Assistant Series Class Study

Alyssa Ashbacher requested approval needed to address structural adjustments.

Health Care Authority, Child Support Services Division Director, Melanie Vigil is present to answer questions.

No questions.

Member Radosevich moved to approve the Child Support Assistant Series Class Study; Member Padilla seconded; roll call; motion carried.

Lead Paralegal Class Study

Austin Basham, SPO Comp & Class Supervisor, requested approval. Nat Chakerers, OSE General Counsel was there in support and to answer questions from the board.

Member Fresquez asked if there is difficulty recruiting into Sr. Paralegal – did your analysis consider bumping up that position?

Basham explained that many agencies are happy with Sr. Paralegal and to avoid disruption, we left Sr. Paralegal as is and added the Lead Paralegal class.

Fresquez asked if with this job title, are we being consistent with using Senior and Lead?

Basham said yes, job leveling structure is consistent.

Member Padilla moved to approve the Lead Paralegal Class Study; Member Fresquez seconded; roll call; motion carried.

Meat & Poultry Inspector Series Class Study

Austin Basham requested approval for Associate Meat & Poultry Inspector, Meat & Poultry Inspector and Supervisor, Meat & Poultry Inspections; joining Basham is Belinda Garland, Executive Director at NMLB supporting the study.

Member Fresquez appreciated Ms. Garland's work on this series.

Chair Lopez noticed a comment in the binder about this being a class series that was vacant at the time of Job Architecture (JA), are there other classifications that are vacant across the state for which we can foresee needing class studies going forward?

Basham said yes, there are jobs that did not make it into the current job catalog.

Member Radosevich moved to approve the Meat & Poultry Series Class Study; Member Fresquez seconded; roll call; motion carried.

Director Lange said he appreciated the NMLB and thanked the executive director for being present and mentioned her informative podcast.

Skills-based Hiring (SBH)

Cynthia Sandoval, SPO Deputy Director and Melanie Morgan, SPO Executive Manager presented the Skills-based Hiring Initiative.

Sandoval introduced the initiative saying the initial goal is to have STARs (*Skilled Through Alternative Routes*) move into management positions.

Goals and next steps:

- Invest in the current workforce;
- Expand the applicant pool;
- Strengthening the quality of hires;
- Pilots in the HR and Finance (STARs) area are a good place to start.

Member Fresquez said she looked at the charts and wondered how you figure out what skills STARs might need to get the training/focus required.

Sandoval said we are digging into the data to figure out potential roadblocks to opportunities. Surveying current workforce to capture information from employees that are not being captured by the data. Is it a lack of skills?

Training and Development at agencies will help fill in the skills gaps that may exist.

Morgan added the approach has been well tested already and we're in a good place.

Director Lange said that NM is a national leader and we are focused on getting more applicants. If you get the right person, they will stay. Right now, 30% do not make it through probation. We are able to develop data because of Job Architecture, now we can focus on making meaningful decisions and plan to get STARs through the process to management. Skills-focused.

Lange continued New Mexico is being celebrated during national conferences as we are already doing this to some degree, and now we are focused, and want to

communicate that there is a role with the state for those looking for work. We are making evidence-driven decisions.

Fresquez said she loves the point about opening the applicant pool, to get a bigger list, it's incredible. Thank you for the presentation and hard work.

Member Padilla agreed saying she was part of the 70% that made it through probation and her career with the state is proof that skills-based hiring is an asset, and she appreciates the work that has gone on and that will continue. Suggestion for the arrangement of words and minimum quals. Start with experience before education.

Vice Chair Parker piggy backed on the previous comments saying the world of work is changing so rapidly. More public facing education – experience and skills matter. Chair Lopez commended the excellent presentation saying she is also a STAR. Testament that you can do anything you put your mind to. Skills change from day to day and giving managers these tools is important. She appreciates the initiative and the timing is perfect.

Adjudication Update

Debra Poulin, SPO Adjudication Judge reporting the docket is consistent from prior meetings. 33 hearings scheduled through February 2027. No questions.

SPO Update

Dylan Lange, SPO Director presented the highlights from each division.

Staff updates:

- Denise Durden, SPO WFP manager has announced her retirement after more than 20 years in state service, the past 7 years spent at SPO.
- Angela Ortega has been promoted to that position. She will work closely with Durden during this transition.
- Zack Scarlott was hired as IT Systems Administrator; Zack was formerly with the DoIT Cybersecurity division.

Director Lange will be a panel member at UNM on April 20, speaking about attracting the next financial leaders of the future and communicating that the skills someone already possesses may be a good fit in the right place.

Lange advised that 15 internships across the state have been funded. We're excited about that and getting good activity for the summer internships.

Fresquez asked about the recruitment dashboard.

Lange said the dashboard has state-wide metrics; vacancy, dates-to-fill. We created a dashboard for agencies to see how they are doing. Focusing on data helps to be able to make stronger decisions for agencies.

Executive Session: Administrative Adjudicatory Deliberations

Citing NMSA 1978, Section 10-15-1(H)(3) Administrative Appeal exception, Chair Lopez moved to enter closed executive session; Member Padilla seconded; roll call – off the record at 10:07.

Motion on Administrative Adjudicatory Deliberations

Lopez called the board back to open session at 10:40

Member Padilla moved to adopt the ALJ recommended decision in *Amber Weaver v. New Mexico Department of Health*; Docket No. 25-032; Member Fresquez seconded; roll call; motion carried.

Next meeting is scheduled in person June 12, 2026. Member Padilla moved to adjourn; Member Fresquez seconded; roll call; meeting adjourned 10:42.

Approved:



**Sandra Lopez, Chair
State Personnel Board**

Attest:



**Dylan K. Lange, Director
State Personnel Office**