

Taos News 2018 primary election guide
Candidate Q and A

Taos County Commission District 1
Jim K. Fambro

Why are you running for office?

I love my community and when I retired from the Town of Taos, I still wanted to serve our citizens in some capacity. I believe in helping to make a difference, and to make Taos County a better place for us all to live.

What could you offer as a county commissioner to the small water systems who struggle with budgets, compliance and recruiting volunteers?

I have spoken numerous times about creating a County water department, that would have a few employees that would be able to go out and help the mutual domestics with minor repairs, assisting with maintenance and planning to assure that these water systems continue to serve their areas. Focusing on the smaller systems that have less volunteers and are in most need of help. The larger systems have staff for the majority of their needs, but they all need outside assistance from time to time, and as the age of the systems and the volunteers grows, more and more assistance will be needed.

The county-owned youth jail has been hemorrhaging money; what ideas do you have for that facility while also maintaining services for youth outside of the jail?

I believe in the Residential Treatment Center over incarceration whenever possible. I have spoken to the Association of Counties regarding possible regional detention centers that would serve adjacent counties for those incarcerated. The only draw back on closing our detention center would mean the job loss of 3, possibly four of the current staff. In my time as Alternate Municipal Judge, I have always felt that treatment is far better than long term incarceration. It reduces repeat offenders if the programs work. If the present Juvenile facility does not work, maybe we can partner with the Town to find a home for the RTC.

How do you feel about the amount of taxes collected in Taos County and how that money is and could be spent?

There are a lot of taxes that pass through the County that benefit other organizations, such as the NCRTD (Blue Bus), mutual domestic water and sanitation districts, and all school systems, including UNM Taos, throughout the county, our county fire districts and through the property taxes, Holy Cross Hospital. A portion of our tax base is what is paying for the county complex, which has been refinanced saving the taxpayers over \$2 Million over the time of the loan. We have had a boost in the last two years from Taos Ski Valley construction and the remediation program in Questa. We need to continue to find ways to continue to boost the gross receipts taxes for the County.

Without using the word “transparency,” what will you do to share information with the public?

Taos County is currently revamping its web site so that it will be more user friendly to our citizens that use this media. I receive numerous emails every week from people throughout the county regarding issues or comments. Our newspaper sends a reporter to most of our meetings and he used to have a section on “County Briefs” that would follow our meetings. I am a phone call away, 575-779-2445. If I cannot answer, leave me a message or a text and I will respond. If I don't have the information needed, I will pass things on to staff and ask them to get you an answer.