



Judy Spady, left, and Kristi Hargrove discuss Prop 103

### **LWV Ballot Issue Forum**

The City Council Chambers of Durango City Hall was the setting for the League of Women Voters Forum on ballot issues for the November 1st mail-in election. The issues discussed were Ballot Issue 2A, to authorize purchase of water from the Animas La Plata project; Proposition 103, to raise taxes for Public Education; and Measure 4A to finance Durango Fire & Rescue.

Members of the Durango Water Commission, Bill Ramaley and Dick Reitz, both of the City Water Commission, and Jack Rogers, Durango Public Works Director explained the issue. Ballot Issue 2A asks voters to approve a \$4 million bond to buy water from the Animas La Plata Project. The city has already paid \$1 million to reserve the right to buy water once the project was finished. The \$4 million would give the city an additional 3,800 acre-feet of water supply. This would provide 799 million gallons of additional storage space. At present the city has 7 days of reserve and this change would increase the reserve to seventy days. The city will repay the 20-year loan with money in the city water department's reserve fund.

Proposition 103 increasing taxes to finance pre-K-12 and higher education was discussed by two mothers, Judy Spady from Bayfield and Kristi Hargrove from Crested Butte. Mrs. Spady spoke against the measure saying there was no guarantee that the money would go to education. She has doubts that the tax increase would end in five years. Mrs. Hargrove said this proposition is not a total solution but in the wake of existing cuts and those expected, it would help at this time.

Measure 4A was explained by Durango Fire and Rescue Authority Chief Dan Noonan. Durango Fire Protection District would raise \$7.7 million annually and would financially consolidate Durango, Animas and Hermosa Cliffs fire districts. The change would first focus on maintaining services at the 2010 level. The authority lost 20 percent of its budget in 2011 and expects to lose 7.5 percent in 2012 because of declining property values.

Ballots for this mail-in only election have already gone out. If you have not received your ballot, call or visit the La Plata County Clerk's office (382-6200) to obtain one. Ballots must be returned to the Clerk's office by 7 pm November 1.

-Mary Lou Falkenstein



Bill Ramaley and Dick Reitz, both of the City Water Commission, and Jack Rogers, Durango Public Works Director explain Ballot Issue 2A



Durango Fire and Rescue Authority Chief Dan Noonan with Stephanie Huss, Past President of LWV LPC.