



Bernalillo County Commissioner  
James Collie



## About the Commissioner:

Commissioner James M. Collie was appointed as commissioner for District 3 in Jan. 2020. Commissioner Collie has lived in Albuquerque for over 25 years, and considers New Mexico his chosen home.

Commissioner Collie received his Bachelor of Arts in history and English from Texas Tech University in 1969. In 1973, he graduated with his Master of Divinity from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. For 20 years, Commissioner Collie served Presbyterian congregations in Louisiana and Texas, before moving to Albuquerque in 1994. He was the Executive Presbyter for northern New Mexico until retiring in 2010.

Before his appointment, Commissioner Collie was a member of the ABC Library Board, and a member of the County Planning Commission. He has also been on the Board of Directors for the Menaul School since 1994, and the chair of the board in 2012.

## IN THE COMMUNITY - DISTRICT 3



Chocolate Dude Owner, Patty Klaus

## “You Got It, Dude.” Nob Hill’s Chocolate Dude is Resilient and Here to Stay

In the midst of Albuquerque’s quirky and vibrant Nob Hill neighborhood lies a key player within Albuquerque’s local chocolate scene: **Chocolate Dude**. This cute little café has been providing tasty treats (and locally-roasted coffee) to the Nob Hill community since 2013. Specializing in handmade chocolates, fudge, caramel apples, and chocolate-covered fruits and nuts - this shop means serious business, dude.

It was originally started by previous owners Kirk Clark and Kurt Oelsner, who were friends from being in a band together. Kirk had been in the business a long time and was a former

“This is a place to hang out, have some coffee, and get quality handmade chocolate for an affordable price.”

- Patty Klaus

chocolatier for Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory. Kurt, on the other hand, was a former manager of ‘Burque’s infamous Bailey’s on the Beach restaurant, which closed in May 2013. Since both had previous industry experience, they formed a partnership and ran Chocolate

Dude together for two years.

After that, the partnership ended and Kurt became a one-man-band (pun intended), who solely ran the business for four more years before deciding to retire. Now fast forward to November 2019 and... what was next? Was Chocolate Dude to be sold or closed?

This is where a 22-year old little spitfire named Patricia “Patty” Klaus comes in.

Not wanting to see Chocolate Dude close and become a memory, Patty took over the business from Kurt and has been running the show since. She’s been with the ‘Dude since October 2017 and was previously the store’s Assistant Manager.

Business ownership was new to the UNM graduate, yet she quickly learned

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
415 Tijeras NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
505-468-7185

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
[Click here to learn more about Bernalillo County Economic Development.](#)

**WANT MORE DISTRICT 3?**  
To learn more about what’s happening in District 3, [click here.](#)

**CHOCOLATE DUDE**  
3339 Central Ave NE, E  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
505-639-5502

## A NOTE FROM BERNALILLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Thank you, Commissioner Collie!

As 2020 comes to a close, we at Bernalillo County Economic Development (BCED) would like to extend our thanks to Commissioner Collie for his service. Throughout his term, Commissioner Collie supported many of our initiatives, and one of those initiatives was business outreach.

Presented with challenges from the ART project, Commissioner Collie knew businesses within the Nob Hill corridor faced financial hardship due to reduced foot traffic and other factors. To determine how to best address their needs, the BCED team walked through District 3's Nob Hill neighborhood to meet with local business owners to see how the county can assist. We listened and recorded their thoughts and concerns and reported back to the Commissioner.

Commissioner Collie also was a notable supporter of our department's CARES Small Business grant program. To date, Bernalillo County has awarded nearly \$8.5M to small businesses and nonprofits within the county. We truly appreciate his support of this important measure.

Thank you, Commissioner! It was a privilege to work with you and we wish you continued success in all your future endeavors.

- The BCED Team

### Welcome, Commissioner Barboa!

Bernalillo County Economic Development would also like to welcome Commissioner-Elect, Adriann Barboa!

After serving as Executive Director for Young Women United for eight years, Adriann decided to open the space of other young women of color to lead and seven years ago started Strong Families NM, a program of Forward Together, where she currently serves as Field Director. Forward Together, is leading work that builds rights, recognition, and resources for all families. As a county commissioner, she looks forward to working with the community to address challenges and opportunities regarding public safety and healthcare.

She is a graduate of Albuquerque High School and attended the University of New Mexico (UNM). While at UNM, she served as a mentor in the ORALE program, supporting Chicano and Latino students in completing high school and accessing Higher Education. From working for YDI to keep young people safe, to creating policy change at local non-profits, she has worked for New Mexican families and is ready to serve District 3.



## IN THE COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

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how to operate and adapt. Little did she know though... that'd she have to do it during a global pandemic.

"I really didn't want to see this place go," she expressed with evident determination on her face. "So I decided to buy it from him."

There's no question that 2020 has provided its fair share of transgressions and challenges – and Chocolate Dude was not immune. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, they were closed for two months and then had to resort to online ordering for a month after that. At one point, Patty had to stop paying herself so that her employees could continue to be.

"It's been tough, but thankfully we have had a lot of community support and loyal customers," says Patty. She laughed and then added, "I've haven't even had to



beg for it yet!"

Thankfully, with help from the community and available financial resources, they have been able to pull through. They received loans through the Paycheck Protection and the Economic Injury programs. Better yet - they even received a \$10,000 grant from Bernalillo County.

When asked how Bernalillo County was able to help the business, she expressed,

"It really helped us. We were able to replace our air conditioner and buy product we didn't have. We ordered a large amount of chocolate and it also



helped me pay employees."

When asked what's in store for Chocolate Dude's future, Patty expressed an interest in rebranding, expanding, and even possibly separating the business. A new logo and a few more

locations are in mind, as well as separating their chocolate and coffee. She also wants to become more involved in the community.

"Our idea is to focus more on the chocolate and separate the coffee into a second business. It would still be a sister company. Coffee and chocolate really go well together, but there is so much to manage in one store that it makes

it challenging to keep everything in stock."

Regarding the candy shop's future, she exclaimed, "I see a good future for Chocolate Dude. It may have some bumps, but I see us expanding and getting the word out. I want more people to see and know that we make everything by hand and know that it's high quality and things that aren't do not make it to the shelf."

With Patty and her team's persistence, it's quite possible that you could see the 'Dude throughout the city in the near future.

One is for sure though: Things are looking up for Chocolate Dude, and we're sure their future is "sweet."