

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025**

A regular board meeting of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Frank Antenori, Chairman; Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman; Kathleen L. Gomez, Supervisor

Staff Present: Sharon Gilman, Interim County Administrator; Joe Casey, Interim Deputy County Administrator; Paul Correa, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney; Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Vice-Chairman Crosby called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**THE ORDER OR DELETION OF ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION AT THE MEETING**

***PRESENTATION***

Presentation on Arizona Open Meeting Law to the incoming Board of Supervisors.

Paul Correa, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney, presented this item. Mr. Correa outlined the key principles and requirements of the Open Meeting Law, which applies to the Board of Supervisors and any meetings involving a quorum of its members. He stated the law ensures that public meetings are accessible and transparent, allowing citizens to attend, listen, and participate. Mr. Correa stated violations can lead to significant consequences, including legal penalties, voided decisions, and even removal from office, underscoring the importance of compliance to avoid disputes and legal challenges.

Vice-Chairman Crosby emphasized the significance of staying informed about Open Meeting Law and related statutes. He stated such diligence helps effectively address the broad range of issues that arise within the scope of board responsibilities.

Presentation acknowledging Dan Duchon, Emergency Management Director, for his successful credentialing as a Type III All-Hazard Operations Section Chief within the Arizona Qualification System (AQS).

Sharon Gilman, Interim County Administrator, presented this item. Ms. Gilman stated Dan Duchon, Emergency Management Director, has earned a significant qualification through his training, knowledge, and experience, enabling him to perform the duties of an All-Hazard

Operations Section Chief. She stated this achievement reflects his commitment to excellence and preparedness in emergency management.

## **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Radford Hyde raised concerns about election integrity, particularly regarding the use of ES&S voting machines.

Kim DePew expressed concerns about the vague language in a consent agenda item supporting broadband service plans.

Cody Essary raised concerns about the proposed Davis Road expansion, highlighting its financial and logistical challenges.

Daniel LaChance expressed gratitude and optimism towards the Board, emphasizing the importance of constitutional governance.

Melissa Avant from First Things First congratulated the supervisors and highlighted the organization's efforts in providing programs and services funded through tobacco tax revenue. She mentioned potential legislation proposing a luxury tax on vaping and nicotine products and requested the board's support for the initiative. She proposed a future work session to discuss the organization's impact in the county and noted the upcoming proclamation for the Week of the Young Child in April.

## **Board of Supervisors**

1. Elect \_\_\_\_\_ as Vice-Chairman to the Board of Supervisors, effective January 7, 2025.

Radford Hyde expressed support for Mr. Crosby, he conveyed confidence in any of the supervisors to take on the role and responsibility effectively.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to Elect Tom Crosby as Vice-Chairman to the Board of Supervisors, effective January 7, 2025. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Vice-Chairman Crosby called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

2. Elect \_\_\_\_\_ as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, effective January 7, 2025.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to elect Frank Antenori as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, effective January 7, 2025. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Vice-Chairman Crosby expressed admiration, support and confidence in Supervisor Antenori's ability to lead Cochise County effectively.

Vice-Chairman Crosby called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

After the vote, Frank Antenori assumed the role of Chairman and took over the meeting.

## **CONSENT**

### **Board of Supervisors**

3. Approve a letter to the State Broadband Director, Sandip Bhowmick, supporting Sulphur Springs Valley Cooperative, Inc.'s (SSVEC) application for funding through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program for all areas of Cochise County served by SSVEC not designated under the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) program.
4. Approve a letter to the State Broadband Director, Sandip Bhowmick, supporting Resound Networks application for funding through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program for all areas of Cochise County not designated under the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) program.
5. Approved the amended committee appointments for members of the Board of Supervisors and executive staff for the 2024-25 Fiscal Year and approve continuing annual memberships for 2024-25, with payment of associated dues as described herein.

### **County Sheriff**

6. Approve Amendment 2 to Agreement M22-0051 between the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA), Cochise County and the Cochise County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), effective October 1, 2022, through December 31, 2025.

### **Development Services**

7. Approve the reappointment of Mr. Larry Saunders to the Planning & Zoning Commission representing District 3, effective January 7, 2025, through December 31, 2028.

### **Elections**

8. Approve the resignation of 2 Democratic Precinct Committeemen by recommendation of the Cochise County Party Chairman.

### **Finance**

9. Approve demands and budget amendments for operating transfers.

### **Health & Social Services**

10. Approve Amendment 2 of Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) CTR070113 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Overdose Data to Action (OD2A), between the Arizona Department of Health Services and Cochise Health and Social Services, in the amount of \$80,000, effective September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve consent agenda items 3-10. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

## ***PUBLIC HEARINGS***

### **Development Services**

11. Adopt Zoning Ordinance 25-01 to rezone tax parcel 102-53-017 from R-36 (Residential District, one dwelling per 36,000 square feet) to RU-4 (Rural District, one dwelling per 4 acres) pursuant to the application of Patrick Willson.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to adopt Zoning Ordinance 25-01 to rezone tax parcel 102-53-017 from R-36 (Residential District, one dwelling per 36,000 square feet) to RU-4 (Rural District, one dwelling per 4 acres) pursuant to the application of Patrick Willson. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori opened the public hearing.

Matthew Taylor, Planner II, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Mr Taylor stated the current use of the property is agricultural, and the applicant intends to develop it for single-family residential use under the County's Owner Builder Amendment. Mr. Taylor noted that nine factors applied to this down-zone, all supporting approval. He stated the request is compatible with the low-density residential growth pattern, reduces the number of allowed principal dwellings, and there was no opposition from nearby property owners. He stated public notification was completed, including legal advertisements, mailed notices, and property postings. He stated that based on these favorable factors, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval.

Chairman Antenori closed the public hearing.

In response to the Board, Mr. Taylor stated the Planning and Zoning Commission voted back in December, and they unanimously recommended approval.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

## ***ACTION***

### **Development Services**

12. Approve Grant Agreement E5S5G01C with the Arizona Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Ground for drainage improvements at the Cochise County Airport in Willcox, in the amount of \$180,000, with a County match of \$18,000.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Grant Agreement E5S5G01C with the Arizona Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Ground for drainage improvements at the Cochise County Airport in Willcox, in the amount of \$180,000, with a County match of \$18,000. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Dan Coxworth, Development Services Director, presented this item. Mr. Coxworth stated the Cochise County Airport location is in a flood hazard area; the soil type, which doesn't facilitate adequate drainage, often leads to water backing up onto the taxiway during rain events. Mr. Coxworth stated the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) had previously allocated similar funding for drainage improvements at this airport, and additional funds are now available. He stated Development Services were informed about the opportunity, and with board approval, they could proceed with applying for this grant.

Chairman Antenori emphasized the strategic importance of the Willcox airport, particularly due to its proximity to municipalities in the northern part of the county. He noted the investment already made in improving the Benson airport and stressed the need to enhance Willcox airport as well. He stated this small municipal airport plays a crucial role, especially during emergencies like forest fires, making it essential to ensure the runway remains usable.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

## Facilities

13. Approve Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Cochise County and the City of Douglas for state required testing and monitoring of the Bisbee-Douglas International Airport (BDI) water and water supply system, in the amount of \$2,190 per month, effective January 1, 2025, through January 1, 2027.

Chairman Antenori made a motion to approve Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Cochise County and the City of Douglas for state required testing and monitoring of the Bisbee-Douglas International Airport (BDI) water and water supply system, in the amount of \$2,190 per month, effective January 1, 2025, through January 1, 2027. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Darrel Crowley, Facilities Director, presented this item. Mr. Crowley stated the County operates two wells that supply the Arizona Department of Corrections prison with water and that the State requires the County to have a water operator. He stated the county has a contract with the City of Douglas to maintain the wells.

Chairman Antenori stated that during the last work session, it was agreed to consider passing the costs on to the primary water user, which is the state prison.

In response to the Board, Ms. Gilman stated she understood the request and would continue to move forward.

In response to the Board, Mr. Crowley stated that the City of Douglas already has a technician dedicated to monitoring the water wells daily, ensuring compliance with the testing requirements.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

## Human Resources

14. Approve amendments to Human Resources Policy 2230, Traumatic Events Counseling, to include 911 dispatchers required due to the transition of South Eastern Arizona Communications Center (SEACOM) employees to the County.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve amendments to Human Resources Policy 2230, Traumatic Events Counseling, to include 911 dispatchers required due to the transition of South Eastern Arizona Communications Center (SEACOM) employees to the County. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Jennifer Graeme, Human Resources Director, presented this item. Ms. Graeme stated the amendment is to add to the current traumatic events counseling policy, which already covers employees such as deputies, constables, and detention officers. The change is needed to include 911 dispatchers, who have also become eligible employees. She stated the fiscal impact is uncertain because it depends on potential future traumatic events, but this addition is mandated by state law.

In response to the Board, Ms. Graeme clarified that the amendment is specifically required by state law. She stated it mandates that employees, such as 911 dispatchers, receive a certain number of counseling visits for traumatic events, and it ensures that these counseling sessions occur while employees are on duty, without requiring them to take time off.

In response to the Board, Ms. Graeme explained that the counseling services must be provided by individuals who meet very specific legal requirements and the cost of these counseling sessions is covered by the county, not by the employees in need of the service.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

15. Approve amendments to Human Resources Policy 2236 Leave of Absence Without Pay.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve amendments to Human Resources Policy 2236 Leave of Absence Without Pay. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Jennifer Graeme, Human Resources Director, presented this item. Ms. Graeme explained that the county has identified areas where its leave of absence without pay Policy needed adjustments to include ensuring compliance with legal requirements, such as the way military leave is treated, and clarifying benefits like retirement contributions and the accrual of leave. She stated the goal was to ensure the policy is clearer and aligns with federal regulations and employee needs.

In response to the Board, Ms. Graeme explained that the county provides 240 hours of military leave every two years to employees in a paid status. She stated that if an employee exceeds the 240-hour limit and goes into unpaid status, they stop accruing paid time off.

In response to the Board, Ms. Graeme stated that the employee is receiving 240 hours of military leave and once that time is exhausted, it is leave without pay.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

16. Approve Human Resources Policy 2237, Employee Recognition and Awards, as written in the attachment, effective January 7, 2025.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to Approve Human Resources Policy 2237, Employee Recognition and Awards, as written in the attachment, effective January 7, 2025. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Sharon Gilman, Interim County Administrator, presented this item. Ms. Gilman discussed the new policy for employee recognition and awards. She stated that in the past, the county had informal programs like Applause recognition, cybersecurity awareness, and volunteer recognition, and these lacked a formal written policy, prompting concerns from auditors about the consistency and clarity in recognizing employees. She stated the new policy ensures these recognitions meet IRS guidelines by keeping the value under \$50 and aligns with the Arizona gift clause, focusing on public service and achievement.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

### **STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION**

17. Discussion and possible action regarding state and federal legislative matters listed or described in the attached County Supervisors Association Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, the Arizona Association of Counties (AACo) Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, and the proposed State budget, and other matters related thereto.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to discuss and possible action regarding state and federal legislative matters listed or described in the attached County Supervisors Association Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, the Arizona Association of Counties (AACo) Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, and the proposed State budget, and other matters related thereto. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

No legislation to discuss.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

### **REPORT BY SHARON GILMAN, INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR -- RECENT AND PENDING COUNTY MATTERS**

Ms. Gilman outlined upcoming calendar items and work sessions for the board. She noted a work session on the comprehensive plan on January 29th, coordination on the jail district budget work session, and a presentation from the Arizona Counties Insurance Pool's executive director on February 26th. She stated that sessions on IGAs, broadband, and elections are still being finalized. Ms. Gilman stated she would be attending the CSA Board of Supervisor Association alongside Supervisor Gomez and Chairman Antenori. Ms. Gilman stated in late January, she would be attending the Cochise Combined Trust annual meeting to learn about employee health benefits changes. Lastly, Ms. Gilman mentioned that there is a possibility of severe weather this week, emphasizing that the safety of the public is a top priority, with a protocol in place for evaluating road conditions and potential adjustments to the board's schedule if needed.

**SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS**

**Report by District 1 Supervisor, Tom Crosby**

Vice-Chairman Crosby thanked everyone for attending and for helping celebrate.

**Report by District 2 Supervisor, Kathleen L. Gomez**

Supervisor Gomez thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She stated that she has an open-door policy and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share and emphasize her commitment to accountability and transparency.

**Report by District 3 Supervisor, Frank Antenori**

Chairman Antenori acknowledged that their agenda will grow as they gather more input from constituents and stay informed about events in their districts. Chairman Antenori thanked his fellow board members for the collaborative start to their first official meeting.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board