

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025**

A regular board meeting of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, September 16, 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: Joe Casey, Deputy County Administrator; Paul Correa, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney; Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Alfred Kern stated he pays taxes but receives no services.

Tyler Stein, representing Rural Arizona Engagement, spoke in opposition to hand counting paper ballots.

Allison Morse stated political violence is unacceptable, she called for a moment of silence, urged everyone to remember, and asked that hate-filled speech be avoided to lower tensions.

George Adams spoke about the poor conditions of Calle Principal.

Chairman Antenori commented that upcoming work sessions and Board meetings will address adding and deleting roads from the county road maintenance schedule. He stated the meetings will be publicly noticed.

CONSENT

Board of Supervisors

1. Approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of September 2, 2025.

Court Administration

2. Approve Fiscal Year 2026 grant funding/reimbursement between the Cochise County Superior Court and the Arizona Department of Economic Security for reimbursable paternity and child support activities, in the amount of \$2,952.96, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Development Services

3. Reappoint Sharon Flissar to serve as the Professional Engineer on Building Code Advisory Board for an additional three-year term to expire on September 25, 2028.
4. Reappoint Mike Rutherford to serve as the General Contractor on Building Code Advisory Board for an additional three-year term to expire on September 25, 2028.
5. Reappoint Philip Issacson to serve as the Green Building General Contractor on Building Code Advisory Board for an additional four-year term to expire on September 25, 2029.
6. Reappoint Billy Seamans to serve as the Fire Marshall on Building Code Advisory Board for a four-year term to expire on September 25, 2029.
7. Approve the appointment of Frank Ambriz to the Planning & Zoning Commission representing District 2, effective September 16, 2025, through December 31, 2026.

Engineering & Natural Resources

8. Proposed Abandonment of Public Alleyways in Blocks 15 and 22 located within the Dragoon Townsite.

Finance

9. Approve demands and budget amendments for operating transfers.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Consent Agenda items 1 through 9. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Vice-Chairman Crosby spoke regarding Agenda item 3 and expressed personal familiarity with Sharon Flissar and strongly endorsed her for the Building Code Advisory Board.

Supervisor Gomez addressed Agenda item 7 and expressed her personal familiarity with Frank Ambriz and strongly endorsed him for the Planning and Zoning Commission representative for District 2.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Board of Supervisors

10. Approve Series 12 (Restaurant) new liquor license application submitted by Salvador Castorena Perez for Street Tacos & Hotdogs Guadalajara at 1100 Arizona Hwy 92, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing and no one chose to speak.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve Series 12 (Restaurant) new liquor license application submitted by Salvador Castorena Perez for Street Tacos & Hotdogs Guadalajara at 1100 Arizona Hwy 92, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Ms. Loewenheim presented this item. Ms. Loewenheim presented a new Series 12 restaurant liquor license application for Street Tacos and Hot Dogs Guadalajara in Sierra Vista. She reported all requirements were met, no protests were received, and Board staff recommended approval.

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

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing.

11. Approve Series 10 (Beer and Wine Store) new liquor license application submitted by Michael Eugene Merrill for Rafter M Meat LLC at 3266 N Fort Grant Road, Willcox, AZ 85643.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing and no one chose to speak.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Series 10 (Beer and Wine Store) new liquor license application submitted by Michael Eugene Merrill for Rafter M Meat LLC at 3266 N Fort Grant Road, Willcox, AZ 85643. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Ms. Loewenheim presented this item. Ms. Loewenheim presented a new Series 10 beer and wine store liquor license application for Rafter M. Meat, LLC in Willcox. She reported all requirements were met, no protests were received and Board staff recommended approval.

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

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing.

Development Services

12. Adopt Zoning Ordinance 25-19 amending Article 2.48.160 (Special Use Authorizations) of the Cochise County Zoning Regulations to update appeal procedures and Board actions, as outlined in Exhibit A.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing and no one chose to speak.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to adopt Zoning Ordinance 25-19 amending Article 2.48.160 (Special Use Authorizations) of the Cochise County Zoning Regulations to update appeal procedures and Board actions, as outlined in Exhibit A. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Christine McLachlan, Development Services Director, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. McLachlan stated docket R25-04 is a staff-initiated text amendment to zoning regulations regarding appeals of special use authorizations. She explained the amendment introduces a remand option with criteria allowing the Board to return a case to the commission once per appeal, ensuring late evidence can be considered while maintaining due process, and noted the commission unanimously recommended approval.

Supervisor Gomez stated the amendment will help address situations where new information is introduced after the planning and zoning commission's decision. She noted this process makes it clear that all information should be presented upfront, ensuring transparency and avoiding last-minute additions during appeals.

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

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing.

Engineering & Natural Resources

13. Adopt Resolution 25-28 to establish James Ranch Road as a Declared County Highway.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to adopt Resolution 25-28 to establish James Ranch Road as a Declared County Highway. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Jackie Watkins, Engineering and Natural Resources Director, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Watkins stated James Ranch Road will serve as the new commercial port of entry, running from Highway 80 to the international border. She explained that declaring it a county highway allows right-of-way acquisition and construction, with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) will handle design and construction. Ms. Watkins reported that National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance has been obtained.

The Board and staff discussed that James Ranch Road will become a county-maintained road after construction. The Board and staff reviewed drainage concerns, noting 27 box culverts at three locations will direct water to Whitewater Draw, and the road will be raised six to seven feet with a drainage easement to manage flood control.

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

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing.

ACTION

Board of Supervisors

14. Approve a Proclamation designating September 14-20, 2025 as Constitution Week.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve a Proclamation designating September 14-20, 2025 as Constitution Week. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Vice-Chairman Crosby read the Proclamation into the record.

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

County Sheriff

15. Approve Subrecipient Agreement 230411-02 Amendment 1 between the Arizona Department of Homeland Security and the Cochise County Sheriff's Office, for Operation Stone Garden Equipment, in the amount of \$201,782, extending the period of performance to be effective April 1, 2024, through August 31, 2026.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve Subrecipient Agreement 230411-02 Amendment 1 between the Arizona Department of Homeland Security and the Cochise County Sheriff's Office, for Operation Stone Garden Equipment, in the amount of \$201,782, extending the period of performance to be effective April 1, 2024, through August 31, 2026. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Ken Foster, Lieutenant Cochise County Sheriff's Department, presented this item. Lieutenant Foster requested Board approval to extend prior funding from 2018 for the purchase of digital analytics equipment. He explained the office initially believed only one unit was needed but later determined additional equipment is essential due to increased digital evidence workload.

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

Court Administration

16. Approve Fiscal Year 2026 Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) funding agreement with the Arizona Supreme Court, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Cochise County Superior Court, in the amount of \$145,824, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Fiscal Year 2026 Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) funding agreement with the Arizona Supreme Court, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Cochise County Superior Court, in the amount of \$145,824, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Rita Shipley, Division Director of Superior Court Budget and Finance, presented this item. Ms. Shipley requested board approval for the Fiscal Year 2026 CASA funding agreement from the Arizona Supreme Court. She explained the funding covers wages, employee-related expenses, and operating costs for two full-time employees and supports volunteers who advocate for abused and neglected children until each case is resolved.

The Board and staff discussed the CASA program's recruitment efforts, noting success through events, advertising, and media campaigns. Ms. Shipley stated volunteers are

retired teachers or military spouses in the Sierra Vista area, serving as special advocates for children.

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

Information Technology

17. Approve the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Yuma, Yuma County, and the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) for Cochise County to join the Arizona Statewide Public Safety Radio System.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Yuma, Yuma County, and the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) for Cochise County to join the Arizona Statewide Public Safety Radio System. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Alan Gordon, Information Technology Director, presented this item. Mr. Gordon stated the agreement allows the county to join its radio system with Yuma County and Department of Public Safety (DPS) systems. He noted there is no cost and it will enhance operational capabilities.

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

STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION

18. 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.

Chairman Antenori noted that the State and Federal Legislature are not in session.

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

Mr. Casey reminded that voting will take place on September 23rd, 2025 in Congressional District 7, with vote centers in Bisbee, Douglas, and Hereford. He also noted the upcoming jail district town halls on September 17th, 2025 in Sierra Vista, and on Wednesday, September 24th, 2025 in Benson. He also announced the county fair is scheduled for September 25–28, 2025 and encouraged the community to come out and support.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS

Report by District 1 Supervisor, Tom Crosby

Vice-Chairman Crosby stated there will be an afternoon meeting discussing the voting system test laboratories (VSTL), and their impact on elections. He noted the session is an executive session but offered to speak with audience members about it afterward.

Report by District 2 Supervisor, Kathleen L. Gomez

Supervisor Gomez reported the upcoming events in her district.

County Fair: September 25–28, 2025, with Thursday as Buddy Day and themed music nights Thursday–Sunday.

Tombstone Helldorado Days: October 17–19, 2025, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Bisbee Blues and Bluegrass Country Pub Crawl: September 26–28, 2025.

Project Wildlife Upper Vista Park Garden Party: September 28, 2025, 5:00–7:00 p.m.

Clean Plane Air Festival: October 9–12, 2025.

Bisbee 1000 Stair Climb: October 18, 2025

Bratz, Bisbee Rolling Arts Transport Society: October 25, 2025.

Justice and Care Collective for the Homeless: October 8, 2025, 12:00–4:00 p.m.

Supervisor Gomez stated two additional work sessions will be scheduled: one on the tourism board’s use of funds and promotion efforts, and another on the comprehensive plan.

Report by District 3 Supervisor, Frank Antenori

Chairman Antenori reported upcoming events, including the Benson Lantern Festival at San Pedro Golf Course this weekend, starting at 3:00 p.m., with lanterns released at dark. He also noted Rex Allen Days in Wilcox scheduled for October 2–5, 2025, featuring performances by the Singing Cowboys.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board