

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026**

A regular board meeting of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, 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, County Administrator; Joe Casey, Deputy County Administrator; Dylan Hendel, Deputy Civil County Attorney; Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS

Report by District 1 Supervisor, Tom Crosby

Vice-Chairman Crosby reflected that while everyone has imperfections, Planning and Zoning Commissioner Randy Limbach was an "imperfect hero" whose humility and service greatly benefited the county, and he will be deeply missed.

Report by District 2 Supervisor, Kathleen L. Gomez

Supervisor Gomez highlighted a successful amateur boxing event in Douglas that drew about 700 attendees, including visitors from outside the county. She stated the Pedal Power Fest scheduled for March 28, 2026, at the Jonquil Motel, featuring bicycle-powered music. She stated the El Tour de Zona, a three-day cycling event, will take place April 11–13, 2026, across Sierra Vista, Bisbee, and Tombstone. She stated on April 11, 2026, the Tombstone Rose Festival Parade at 11:00 a.m. on Allen Street, with a \$15 participation fee, and the Trojan Run at 7:00 a.m. at Border Airpark in Douglas, which supports the Douglas Airport Museum. Lastly, she noted the Lavender Pit shared-use path project in Bisbee will be moving into the bidding phase. She stated the project will provide a safe, off-road route for walking and biking along the SR-80 corridor.

Report by District 3 Supervisor, Frank Antenori

Chairman Antenori thanked the County Sheriff's Office and Emergency Services Director, Dan Duchon for their quick response to a water outage in Pearce caused by pump failures at the Hope Water Company. He also recognized Sulphur Springs Valley Electric, Southwest Gas, and Northern Cochise Community Hospital for their support and offers of assistance during the incident.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Allen Conrad spoke on various issues.

Allison Morse spoke on various issues.

Dan Baker spoke on various issues.

Christine Atchison spoke on various issues.

Tricia Gerrodette spoke on various issues.

CONSENT

Board of Supervisors

1. Approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of March 10, 2026.

Elections

2. Approve the 7 appointments and 1 resignation of Precinct Committeemen, by recommendation of their respective Cochise County Party Chairman, to service through the October 1, 2026, term.

Finance

3. Approve demands and budget amendments for operating transfers.

Housing Authority

4. Approve a proclamation to declare April 2026 as Fair Housing Month in Cochise County.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Consent items 1 through 4.
Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Board of Supervisors

5. Adopt Resolution 26-07 granting a telecommunications Franchise to Valley Telephone Cooperation, LLC.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to adopt Resolution 26-07 granting a telecommunications Franchise to Valley Telephone Cooperation, LLC. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Hendel presented this item. Mr. Hendel stated that the item is a standard telecommunications franchise agreement renewal with Valley Telephone Cooperative LLC and contains no changes.

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

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

Development Services

6. Adopt Zoning Ordinance 26-08 to rezone tax parcel 117-02-314D, formerly tax parcels 117-02-309, 312, 313, and 314C, from SR-43 (Single-Household Residential District, one dwelling per 43,000 square feet) to SR-174 (Single-Household Residential District, one dwelling per 4 acres) pursuant to the application of Michael and Susan Drougas (Supervisor District 3).

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to adopt Zoning Ordinance 26-08 to rezone tax parcel 117-02-314D, formerly tax parcels 117-02-309, 312, 313, and 314C, from SR-43 (Single-Household Residential District, one dwelling per 43,000 square feet) to SR-174 (Single-Household Residential District, one dwelling per 4 acres) pursuant to the application of Michael and Susan Drougas (Supervisor District 3). Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing.

Matthew Taylor, Planning Division Manager, presented this item. Mr. Taylor presented a rezoning request (RZ 2601) by Michael and Susan Drougas to change the zoning of property in Sunset #2 (APN 117-02-314) from SR-43 to SR-174 for residential use. He noted the request complies with zoning regulations, received limited public support, and was recommended for approval without conditions by both the Planning and Zoning Commission and staff. Michael Drougas, applicant, stated he would like to move forward.

Tricia Gerrodette asked staff to clarify the difference between SR-174 and RU-4 zoning, noting that both appear to allow a four-acre parcel for residential development.

Mr. Taylor stated the easiest distinction to make between the two is RU-4 allows manufactured housing and SR-174 does not.

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing.

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

ACTION

Board of Supervisors

7. Approve a Lease Agreement between Cochise County and University South Foundation, Inc. on behalf of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, for the use of a single office space at the Groth Hall, 1140 N. Colombo Avenue, Sierra Vista, AZ, in the amount of \$750.00 per month, effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve a Lease Agreement between Cochise County and University South Foundation, Inc. on behalf of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, for the use of a single office space at the Groth Hall, 1140 N. Colombo Avenue, Sierra Vista, AZ, in the amount of \$750.00 per month, effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

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

8. Adopt Resolution 26-08 declaring vacancies on the Sunsites-Pearce Fire District Governing Board due to resignations that resulted in the loss of a quorum, and to direct staff to solicit letters of interest from qualified electors of the Sunsites-Pearce Fire District to fill the vacancies by appointment of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors until the next general election. Letters of interest will be accepted through 5:00 p.m. on April 3, 2026.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to adopt Resolution 26-08 declaring vacancies on the Sunsites-Pearce Fire District Governing Board due to resignations that resulted in the loss of a quorum, and to direct staff to solicit letters of interest from qualified electors of the Sunsites-Pearce Fire District to fill the vacancies by appointment of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors until the next general election. Letters of interest will be accepted through 5:00 p.m. on April 3, 2026. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Ms. Loewenheim presented this item. Ms. Loewenheim stated that multiple resignations have left the Sunsites-Pearce Fire District Governing Board without a quorum, requiring the Board of Supervisors to declare vacancies and initiate the appointment process. She explained that, if approved, staff will solicit and review letters of interest from qualified electors and return with recommendations for appointment at a future meeting.

Chairman Antenori explained that multiple resignations due to personal circumstances left the board without a quorum, preventing it from appointing replacements. He outlined a plan for the Board of Supervisors to appoint one member to restore a quorum, after which the reconstituted fire district board will fill the remaining vacancies from submitted applications.

Vice-Chairman Crosby expressed appreciation for community members who volunteer to serve on boards, and their willingness reflects their commitment and care for the community.

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

County Sheriff

9. Approve the annual Work Plan for Cooperative Service Agreement 26-73-04-0228-RA between Cochise County and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Wildlife Services, in the amount of \$63,983, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve the annual Work Plan for Cooperative Service Agreement 26-73-04-0228-RA between Cochise County and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Wildlife Services, in the amount of \$63,983, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Kenneth Bradshaw, Cochise County Jail Commander, presented the annual renewal of the county's contract with USDA for a wildlife specialist, noting the position helps manage wildlife issues such as skunks and rabid coyotes. He emphasized that the service saves significant time for deputies and animal control officers and is an important function for the county.

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

10. Approve a donation to the Cochise County Sheriff's Office from the Support Our Sheriff's Foundation, Inc. in the amount of \$390,000, to be used for public records redaction software, various facility improvements, CPR machines at the jail, and recognition badges for America's 250th birthday.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve a donation to the Cochise County Sheriff's Office from the Support Our Sheriff's Foundation, Inc. in the amount of \$390,000, to be used for public records redaction software, various facility improvements, CPR machines at the jail, and recognition badges for America's 250th birthday. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

John Gjerde, Cochise County Sheriff's Department Acting Commander, explained that a donation from the Support our Sheriff's Foundation, Incorporated, will fund several initiatives, including \$109,000 for public records redaction software to reduce backlog and improve processing efficiency over the next three years. He added that remaining funds will support facility improvements, equipment such as a CPR machine at the jail, and America's 250th birthday recognition badges for Sheriff's Office staff.

Supervisor Gomez expressed appreciation for the Sheriff's Office, thanking them for their support and positive presence at a recent meeting she attended.

Chairman Antenori expressed appreciation for the wide scope of responsibilities handled by the Sheriff's Office, noting that their work extends far beyond typical expectations. He commended staff for the many additional duties they perform that often go unrecognized.

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

Housing Authority

11. Adopt Resolution 26-09 to approve AZ034 Streamlined 2026-2027 Annual Plan Effective July 1, 2026, and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan Effective March 24, 2026.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to adopt Resolution 26-09 to approve AZ034 Streamlined 2026-2027 Annual Plan Effective July 1, 2026, and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan Effective March 24, 2026. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Anita Baca, Housing Director, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Baca presented the Housing Authority's annual plan required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), requesting approval timelines for both the annual plan effective July 1, 2026, and immediate approval of the administrative plan.

She outlined key revisions, including adding a preference for emergency housing vouchers to support vulnerable families as funding assistance, and noted there are no new capital activities planned aside from pursuing additional vouchers. She reported the Housing Authority met prior goals, maintains high performance standards, and continues ensuring safe, compliant housing through inspections and regulatory adherence. She also highlighted ongoing efforts in fair housing training, self-sufficiency programs, and housing outreach, and concluded by requesting approval to implement the proposed changes and transition affected families.

The Board and staff discussed housing inspection standards, with questions about how "safe, decent, and sanitary" conditions are verified and whether some reliance is placed on landlords or other agencies. Ms. Baca clarified that certain multifamily properties follow separate inspection protocols through HUD allowing for less frequent county inspections. The Board inquired about tenant-related issues, the organization and outreach of the Resident Advisory Board, and opportunities for public participation. Ms. Baca explained that continued efforts to encourage involvement despite low response.

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

Information Technology

12. Approve Cochise County Information Technology Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) Policy #1810, which establishes standards and guidelines governing the responsible use of generative AI technologies by individuals using County systems or resources.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve Cochise County Information Technology Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) Policy #1810, which establishes standards and guidelines governing the responsible use of generative AI technologies by individuals using County systems or resources. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Tricia Gerrodette, spoke in support and opposition and discussed the reasons.

Mr. Casey explained that any decision to halt the use of an AI system would fall under

existing IT policies and procedures, which govern approved and restricted applications within the county system.

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

Workforce Development

13. Approve the appointment of Cullen Scarborough to the Local Workforce Investment Board, effective March 24, 2026, through June 30, 2030.

Vice-Chairman made a motion to approve the appointment of Cullen Scarborough to the Local Workforce Investment Board, effective March 24, 2026, through June 30, 2030. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

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

14. Approve the appointment of Desiree Galaz to the Local Workforce Investment Board, effective March 24, 2026, through June 30, 2030.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve the appointment of Desiree Galaz to the Local Workforce Investment Board, effective March 24, 2026, through June 30, 2030. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

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

15. Approve the appointment of Elaine Rodriguez to the Local Workforce Investment Board, effective March 24, 2026, through June 30, 2030.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve the appointment of Elaine Rodriguez to the Local Workforce Investment Board, effective March 24, 2026, through June 30, 2030. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

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

STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION

16. 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 expressed disappointment after meeting with state representatives, stating they did not fully understand how the proposed gas tax measure would negatively impact county road funding. She emphasized concern that, if passed, it could significantly harm the county's ability to maintain roads.

Chairman Antenori explained that while legislators believe they understand the issue, their proposal would only backfill the gas tax revenue loss to match the previous year's funding level, meaning any increase in fuel sales would not generate additional revenue for transportation funds. He cautioned that the plan could negatively impact county, local, and state road projects.

Chairman Antenori noted that legislation to convert Chiricahua National Monument into a national park has passed the House and is now under consideration in the Senate. He added that, if approved, the designation could increase tourism in Cochise County due to heightened interest in national parks.

Supervisor Gomez reported seeking support for establishing a screwworm distribution center at Bisbee Douglas Airport (BDI), noting she has received backing from multiple agricultural organizations and is coordinating outreach to state and federal officials. Chairman Antenori emphasized that addressing the screwworm issue is critical to maintaining cross-border cattle trade, as infestations currently prevent Mexican ranchers from bringing cattle into the United States for finishing and sale.

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

Ms. Gilman recognized Budget Manager Stacey Fenhaus for receiving the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award on behalf of Cochise County. She highlighted that this marks Fenhouse's second consecutive award.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:29 a.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board