

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
Tuesday, March 24, 2015**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 1:30 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Patrick G. Call, Chairman; Ann English, Vice-Chairman; Richard R. Searle, Member

Staff Present: Michael J. Ortega, County Administrator
Jim Vlahovich, Deputy County Administrator
Britt W. Hanson, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Arlethe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board
Karen Lamberton, County Transportation Planner

Chairman Call called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.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

INTRODUCTIONS

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction on the Cochise County 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Ms. Riggs, Highway & Floodplain Director, introduced the topic and said that the plan had been addressed in April, 2011. She added that a County of this size is not mandated to have a transportation plan, but the Board felt it was crucial.

Ms. Karen Lamberton, County Transportation Planner, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. She noted that the long term transportation plan was part of the County Strategic Plan and outlined the major topics: historic and existing conditions; the future and 2040 needs; priority corridors and projects; funding constraints and potential strategies; and recommendations and Board direction. She showed a map of the County in 1881 and presently and noted population, housing, economic drivers and impact on roads. She said that there were some problem areas in the County due to heavy loads, and adverse weather.

Chairman Call asked what the default speed limit in the County was.

Ms. Lamberton said that the speed limit was set by state statute and was 65 mph. She added that soft improvements and public education would help the transportation system.

Vice-Chairman English asked where the information came from and who had done the projections.

Ms. Lamberton said that the federal government developed the population projections, some information was obtained by working with members of local jurisdictions, and a technical advisory committee was also formed to help with research.

Vice-Chairman English asked if there were any statistics in recreational traffic trends and stated that upgrades should be done in populated areas highly used by the public.

Ms. Lamberton said they were working with the Southeast Arizona Government Organization (SEAGO), who has a grant for road counts, on acquiring this type of information and would share it with the Board as soon as it was put together.

Mr. Riggs added that some traffic count reports are already available and included in the annual work plan.

Supervisor Searle asked if agriculture information could also be included in the discussion as it impacts usage on some roads.

Ms. Riggs said that she would have more detailed agriculture information in the future.

Ms. Lamberton continued with the presentation focusing on historic roads in the County and noting how technology is changing many aspects of transportation operations to include signage, airport usage, and fuel. She asked the Board to provide flexibility in the budget to address growth and reduction in certain areas of the County. She added that in order to own County roads the Board would have to invest in acquiring right of ways, which makes future projects easier to plan.

Vice-Chairman English stated that a conscious effort to get right of way for currently maintained roads should be a priority.

Ms. Lamberton moved on and showed a map of the transportation corridors in the County.

Supervisor Searle asked if Fort Grant Road could be added.

Ms. Lamberton agreed and then listed recommended upgrades and improvements for the transportation corridors. She noted that key issues with alternate modes: no existing mechanism to develop or maintain pedestrian, bicycle, or transit amenities. She said that she did not recommend that the County take on direct transit positions, but noted that County residents are very reliant on the state highway system.

Mr. Ortega noted that liability is also part of the discussion as plans and projects move forward.

Ms. Lamberton continued and focused on transportation funding and costs. She went into detail on existing funding and what needs to be done in order to address decreasing revenues and noted that one of the biggest issues is ensuring that the public is aware of the challenges and that the County develops realistic expectations.

Chairman Call noted that it is difficult to keep current funding sources as the State cost shifts and decrease in funding like the Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) mean less money to fix and maintain current County roads.

The Board requested that more suggestions be put together and current plans updated and brought to the Board formally to vote on during a regular meeting and thanked staff for the work on the plan.

Chairman Call adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

APPROVED:

Patrick G. Call, Chairman

ATTEST:

Arlethe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board