

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
Tuesday, December 6, 2016**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

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

Staff Present: James E. Vlahovich, County Administrator
Edward T. Gilligan, Deputy County Administrator
Arlethe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board

Attendees: Philip S. Leiendecker, County Assessor
Julie Morales, Human Resources Director
Kelley Jones, Human Resources Analyst
Chris Mullinax, Risk Manager
Lynette Nowlan, Finance Director

Chairman Searle called the meeting to order at 3:00 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 regarding possible revisions to Cochise County Human Resources Policies and Merit Rules.

Mr. Jim Vlahovich, County Administrator gave a brief overview on the policies and merit rules considered for change. He said that the new policies discussed were: workplace violence, budget, confidentiality, and food/beverage. He added that amendments to the following policies would be considered: vehicle use, merit rules - commission hearings and certification lists, and human resources - sick leave upon separation.

Mr. Ed Gilligan, Deputy County Administrator, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. He explained the motivation for change was to:

- Ensure fair and consistent practices and procedures
- Address emerging workplace issues
- Limit liability
- Comply with state laws
- Promote fiscal responsibility and public transparency

Ms. Julie Morales, Human Resources Director, discussed the new policies. She said that the workplace violence policy demonstrated the County's commitment to employee and citizen safety as well as provides emergency response procedures and that the Confidentiality policy would establish expectations for maintenance of sensitive information for all employees.

Mr. Leiendecker said he was concerned with all the policies and how they would affect elected offices.

Mr. Vlahovich said that staff would work with all departments to inform all employees about these policies if they are adopted by the Board.

Ms. Riggs asked about the definitions of firearms in the workplace policy. She stated that it should include all weapons and asked if a police report would be filed for these type of incidents. She also asked what type of investigators would be hired.

Ms. Morales ensured everyone that law enforcement would be notified. She said that investigators for this policy would be similar to investigators currently used for other issues. She noted that most investigations are done internally, but that would change if law enforcement was involved and added that the Arizona Counties Insurance Pool could also be a resource if needed.

Ms. Morales moved on to the confidentiality policy and explained that the reason for this policy was to establish an expectation for all employees in regards to maintenance of sensitive information. She added that this policy focused on information that was not necessarily able to be disclosed, medical information, and personal information.

Mr. Vlahovich gave the background on the proposed budget policy. He stated that the policy from Navajo County was used as an example. He noted that it sets a level playing field, explains how the budget is put together, and outlines staff responsibilities.

Ms. Nowlan said that the policy would include statutes that have to be followed by the County; define the budget types that can be used; and annotate that budgets should be supported by a strategic plan.

Chairman Searle stated that a formal policy was not needed in his opinion as the budget was the County Administrator's responsibility and he would put it together in his or her individual preference, not by following a policy set by the Board.

Vice-Chairman said he did not want a rigid structure for the budget process.

Ms. Nowlan said that a budget policy could be useful if a legal issue comes up.

Chairman Searle said at this time he did not think a budget or a food and beverage policy was necessary, but did support the workplace violence policy and the confidentiality policy.

Mr. Gilligan outlined the proposed revisions to the vehicle use policy:

- Defines unacceptable driving record
- Establishes a requirement to report law enforcement contact

- Places accountability for timely and appropriate corrective action within the chain of command
- Establishes criteria for mandatory suspension of driving privileges
- Changes mission of Risk Review Board

Supervisor English said that the vehicle use policy was critical since the liability was the County's and the Board's responsibility.

Ms. Riggs said that she thought it was a good thing that the policy was now consistent with the merit rules and clarified the responsibilities of discipline.

Mr. Gilligan said that the changes to the policy gave authority to the Elected Officer or Department Director.

Mr. Vlahovich noted that the number of accidents are increasing and he thought that if the accountability was at the department level it would decrease the number of accidents.

Mr. Gilligan said that the Incident Risk Review Board would still track all incidents, but the Department would be responsible for the discipline. He noted that the policy respected the Hounshell Case, but showed that the financial interest lies with the Board.

Ms. Morales moved on and said that driving records were also part of the amendment to the vehicle use policy.

Chairman Searle said that he would not recommend pulling driving records on an annual basis and suggested maybe every two years.

Mr. Vlahovich said that mileage reimbursement would be closely monitored to ensure pool vehicles were used as much as possible.

Mr. Leiendecker said that he supported employees using their personal vehicles for County travel.

Ms. Morales moved on to discuss merit rule changes: merit commission hearings would be open to the public, and the amendment would increase the Sheriff's Office certification list duration to one year.

Mr. Gilligan discussed sick leave upon separation from service. He showed the current policy, went over statistics, went over the research done, and stated that all leave policies should be related to the benefit plan's structure. He listed the proposed changes:

- Delete reference to A.R.S. 38-615
- Delete 15 year service requirement
- Draft comprehensive new benefits accrual, forfeiture, and payment upon separation policies

He noted that employees would have to decide between the new plan or the current plan.

Supervisor English said that leave needed to be structured with limitations.

The Board directed staff to bring all policy and merit rule revisions to a formal board meeting.

The Board said that at this time they would only consider adding the workplace violence policy and confidentiality policy.

Chairman Searle adjourned the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

APPROVED:

Richard R. Searle, Chairman

ATTEST:

Arlthe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board