

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2021**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Friday, September 24, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Ann English, Chairman; Tom Crosby, Supervisor
Absent: Peggy Judd, Vice-Chairman
Staff Present: Richard G. Karwaczka, County Administrator
Sharon Gilman, Associate County Administrator
Kim Lemons, Clerk of the Board
Attendees: Alicia Thompson, Health & Social Services Director
Erik McLaughlin, Medical Director
Edward Miller, Copper Queen Community Hospital Chief Medical Officer
Daniel Williamson, Epidemiologist

Chairman English called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

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

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

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and Possible Direction on the current status of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Dr. Thompson, Dr. Miller, Dr. McLaughlin, and Mr. Williamson presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Dr. Miller began with a review of the current situation at county hospitals. Currently, COVID-19 patients are being transferred between hospitals statewide based on the level of care necessary. Other critical care patients are not being transferred between hospitals, resulting in fatalities. The State health department has rejected requests to expand the transfer policy to all patients. The Board and staff discussed vaccination reasons and ICU usage by location and type of patient.

Dr. Erik McLaughlin reviewed three new COVID-19 variants, Mu, Lambda, and C.1.2, and how they compare to the Delta variant. The proactive approach for preventing and reducing the severity of infection from all variants is vaccination. Masking and distancing are also effective mitigations. The Board and staff discussed different studies released and the range of research sources.

Dr. Thompson presented information on COVID-19 cases, breakthrough cases, hospitalization rates, and vaccinations. Cases and hospitalizations are trending upward.

Breakthrough cases remain low. The Pfizer booster dose has been approved and is recommended for particular populations, and only for individuals who received the Pfizer vaccine for the primary series. Both COVID-19 vaccinations and flu shots are available. COVID-19 vaccination does not protect against influenza. COVID-19 testing is free to the individual, and she asked that any locations charging for tests be reported to their office.

Mr. Williamson presented on COVID-19 infection rates in schools. There has been a substantial increase in school related cases in the past two weeks, and 27 schools are currently meeting the outbreak definition.

The Board and staff discussed information being given by different federal agencies, and the evolution of recommendations as more data is available.

Chairman English adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

APPROVED:

Ann English, Chairman

ATTEST:

Kim Lemons, Clerk of the Board