

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2022**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Ann English, Chairman; Peggy Judd, Vice-Chairman, telephonic; Tom Crosby, Supervisor

Staff Present: Richard G. Karwaczka, County Administrator
Sharon Gilman, Deputy County Administrator
Christine Roberts, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Tim Mattix, Clerk of the Board
Camila Rochin, Public Information Officer

Attendees: Robert Watkins, Operations Commander
Megan Kennedy, Detention Medical Services Manager

Chairman English called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.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 regarding the proposed creation of a Mental Health Support Team in Cochise County, with initial program funding via a Grant Agreement with the Legacy Foundation of Southeast Arizona in the amount of \$1,263,449.

Commander Watkins presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Commander Watkins stated that mental health is a growing crisis. With increasing frequency, resources from the Sheriff's Office must be re-allocated to address mental health concerns, including responding to citizens experiencing a mental health crisis and transporting Title 36 patients to Pima County. Deputies are unable provide mental health first aid to individuals who do not qualify for assistance from one of the existing crisis mobile teams.

The Mental Health Support Team (Team) to be created with this grant intends to respond to citizens experiencing a mental health crisis and treat mental illness as a health condition instead of a crime. Commander Watkins outlined seven steps in building the Team and the qualifications necessary for the positions. Steps include hiring a Lead Behavioral Health Professional; building the rest of the Team and acquiring necessary vehicles and equipment; creating schedules and staffing

assignments; training for both the Team and also Sheriff Deputies; collecting statistical data to assess the effectiveness of the program and allocation of resources; aggressively applying for grants to continue the program and improve the Team; and, sharing the successes of the program.

The Board and Commander Watkins discussed the recruitment of mental health professionals for the Team; the complications of alcohol and substance abuse; reasons for recidivism; and the role of the Health Department in the program.

Ms. Kennedy and Commander Watkins outlined resources already in place to help individuals, and discussed various details of how the Team would function. Commander Watkins emphasized that the Team is meant to augment current offerings by the County and external organizations.

Ms. Roberts reiterated how this program would alleviate pressure on other departments and programs offered by the County, and help those who currently do not qualify for existing programs.

The Board expressed their support of the grant and Team and thanked Commander Watkins for his work on the program.

Chairman English adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.

APPROVED:

Ann English, Chairman

ATTEST:

Tim Mattix, Clerk of the Board