

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

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

Staff Present: Richard G. Karwaczka, County Administrator
Sharon Gilman, Deputy County Administrator/Interim Clerk of the Board
Christine Roberts, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Lara Loewenheim, Deputy Clerk of the Board

Attendees: Jackie Watkins, Engineering & Natural Resources Director
Marty Haverty, Director of Public Works
Jason Faccio, Operations Superintendent, Highways
Fred Nixon, Operations Superintendent, Fleet
Mark Apel, Environmental Projects Coordinator
Joaquin Solis, Assistant Director of Highway and Flood
Robert Hill, Operations Superintendent, Solid Waste

Chairman Judd called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding the Engineering & Natural Resources Department Informational Update, including the following topics:
 - Engineering Division Update; and,
 - Flood Control Division Update.

Ms. Watkins presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation and answered questions from the Board throughout. Ms. Watkins reviewed projects completed in the last quarter which include, the special event permit on Citizenserve, a box culvert on Geronimo Trail, nighttime sign inspections, awarded grants and survey flights were completed to detect possible diversion of water.

Ms. Watkins reviewed that the Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) is a flat \$.18 per gallon flat tax that was established in 1990. All of the counties in Arizona get 19% of the \$.18, which equates to \$.0342 per gallon, of which \$.0012per gallon is received by Cochise County. Ms. Watkins explained that this calculation is not just based on what fuel is purchased in the County, it is based on what is purchased in the state. Therefore, the County is receiving more HURF than it pays in as a County. In response to the Board, staff explained that Border Patrol and the County pay gas tax.

Ms. Watkins discussed the damage and stress on the roads that various vehicles cause. She stated that a class 9 truck does as much damage and stress as 4000 cars and the roads that have heavy truck traffic will fall apart sooner and with the international port of entry in Douglas, truck traffic will increase on Davis Road.

Ms. Watkins reviewed the traffic counts on the higher volume roads with truck traffic, which are Davis Road, Fort Grant Road, Kansas Settlement (with side roads Shelton and Bell Ranch), Dragoon Road, Washington Avenue and 7th Street in Sierra Vista. She stated that Davis Road currently has 1800 cars and 80 trucks travel on it per day which will double or triple when the port of entry goes in within the next 10 to 15 years. The port of entry project is on schedule and will be open by 2028. The Board and Staff discussed various routes trucks may take from the port of entry.

Ms. Watkins reviewed the traffic counts on the higher volume roads without truck traffic, which were Moson Road, Naco Highway, Charleston Road, Hereford Road, Ocotillo Road, Pomerene Road and Double Adobe.

Ms. Watkins stated that they are updating the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) and did a traffic study on San Xavier in Sierra Vista. She explained the temporary speed tables that were used were purchased 20 years ago and had to be removed due to further deterioration. The member of the public who requested the study no longer wants the speed humps due to residents seeing how fast they can go over the speed humps. Ms. Watkins stated that a draft of the NTMP policy, which has not been updated since 2003, will be brought to the Board in a work session.

Ms. Watkins stated that \$1 million was received from Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization (SVMPO) for the design of Moson Road, part of the project will be obtaining National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearance. She stated that once NEPA clearance is completed the County will hire a consultant and start obtaining additional right-of-way.

Ms. Watkins reviewed the multiple projects on Davis Road. She stated a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant was awarded to do a study, create 15% design plans and perform NEPA clearance for the 22 miles between Highway 80 and Central Highway. Ms. Watkins stated that the County was awarded almost \$3 million from Senator Kelly's discretionary funds to widen Davis Road at mileposts 5 and 13 to accommodate wide loads and the future widening of the road. The cost is approximately \$6 million, so they are still trying for additional grants to pay for the rest of the project. Ms. Watkins stated that they are in the process of acquiring right-of-way and completing 100% design to apply for construction grants for the Davis Road project between Central Highway and US 191.

Ms. Watkins displayed a slide that depicted a truck that went through the County last month. It was 20 feet wide, almost 18 feet high, 215 feet long and was 300 tons and 20 axles. Ms. Watkins stressed the importance of vegetation management because when these wide loads go through, people need to get off the road and during the rains people get stuck.

Ms. Watkins stated that they are doing surveys at Sands Ranch for drainage issues and Horseshoe Draw to measure the sediment. She stated that they are getting a Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS) to replace the one on top of the IT department. In response to the Board, Ms. Watkins stated that a CORS is base station that will be used by surveyors so the surveyor does not need to put up their own base station and its more precise. Ms. Watkins stated that Willcox put up a station last year

and she would like to put one up in Whetstone and Elfrida to make it easier to do surveys without having extra equipment.

Ms. Watkins stated that they are still having citizen concerns about drainage and people diverting water on and off of their property, She also stated the department is having a lot of commercial reviews with the transmission line and the solar developments going in throughout the County.

Ms. Watkins stated that the Floodplain Regulations will be brought to the Board for approval on September 12. She stated that she has had a few people comment and anyone can comment and they will respond back. Ms. Watkins stated that she spoke to builders regarding the 1 foot elevation requirement and as a result of that, it will be reworded to state that it would be required to have 1 foot clearance from the flow path of the floodwater to the finished elevation of the home. She stated that this would only apply to residential and commercial buildings and would attempt to prevent future homes from flooding and is not retroactive. Chairman Judd and Ms. Watkins discussed that this is not a big change due to the fact that a slab for a home is about 8 inches. Ms. Watkins stated that it will be clarified that positive drainage is needed away from the home. She stated that the Community Rate System (CRS) will be audited next week, which is a 5 year cycle for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) CRS that gives a 5% decrease on flood insurance.

Ms. Watkins discussed the FEMA mapping. She stated preliminary maps are complete for Bisbee and St. David, and the preliminary maps are being redone for Benson, Huachuca City, Sierra Vista and Hereford. In response to the Board, Ms. Watkins stated that these maps are typically redone every 20 years unless there is a lot of development. Ms. Watkins stated the BRIC grant is still pending for the Willcox Basin watershed study. She stated that a request was made to the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to do a watershed study in Rucker Canyon, which would be the first step to help with the flooding that occurred in Elfrida last year. A watershed study was also requested for the St. David alluvial fan flooding on the west side of the San Pedro. Ms. Watkins explained that the alluvial fan flooding is not a defined path, it can vary by storm and getting that mapped will allow more information on how people should build their homes. In response to the Board, Ms. Watkins stated this is not located in the town of St. David, it is on the other side of the river. Ms. Watkins stated that due to the new International Port of Entry that is going in, a watershed study will possibly need to be completed on the west side of Whitewater Draw for the connector road that the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) will be building. She stated that there is a lot of shallow sheet flooding in the Port of Entry area and a watershed study could determine the need for a detention pond upstream.

Ms. Watkin's explained the collection process for the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) audit for the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4).

Mr. Solis gave an update on Leslie Canyon Pond and stated that the hydraulic analysis of the embankment that the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) is requesting be removed is in progress. The proposal is to design it to maximize the containment area to slow the water downstream.

Mr. Solis stated that the hydrological analysis of Bay Acres is currently at 42% complete, which is determining the quantity of water flow, the hydraulic analysis is at 38%, which is the flood plane mapping, and the design to create the channel is 42% complete and should be completed in the spring. Ms. Watkins stated that there will then be design costs and this project will be in the millions to construct and they will be

looking for grants, and construction will be contracted out.

Ms. Watkins stated that the Phase II site investigation has been completed and a Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI) grant of \$900,000 has been obtained for final design and permitting for Riverstone in the Upper San Pedro area. She stated that the armor around the outlet pipes is complete and the design and fix the overflow outlet structure at Horseshoe Draw still needs to be completed. Ms. Watkins stated that the Bisbee Effluent is on track and the design concept report will be completed this fall.

Ms. Watkins reported that 60% plans were received last week for Coyote Wash, so final design is expected sometime this winter. Ms. Watkins explained that a public meeting will be part of the NEPA clearance. She stated that this is a flood control structure to divert out and back into Coyote Wash to restore the natural hydrograph of the floodplain. There are construction funds from a REPI grant for \$1.5 million.

Vice-Chairman Crosby asked where the gravel pit is at Coyote Wash.

[Video and audio connection was lost at 2:32:30 pm]

[Video and audio connection was regained at 2:35:49 pm]

Vice-Chairman Crosby rejoined the meeting via phone.

Vice-Chairman Crosby asked Ms. Watkins to send him the information on the NTMP as people had asked him about it. Ms. Watkins stated that she would send him the information.

The Board and Ms. Watkins discussed the speed bumps on Cheorkee.

Supervisor English stated that they get a lot of questions regarding the Highway and Solid Waste Departments, so it is very helpful to have the routine updates so that they know what is happening in those areas.

Chairman Judd adjourned the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

APPROVED:

Peggy Judd, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sharon Gilman, Interim Clerk of the Board