

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2023**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, August 22, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Peggy Judd, Chairman; Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman; 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: Mark Dannels, Sheriff
Tom Alinen, Chief of Staff

Chairman Judd called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding County animal shelter agreements and projects.

Ms. Gilman presented the item using a PowerPoint presentation and answered questions from the Board throughout. The purpose of the work session was to follow up on the work session held on July 27, 2023 to discuss the property tour of Marsh Development located in Huachuca City as a possible alternative site for an animal shelter. Ms. Gilman discussed an opportunity of partnering on an expansion with Sierra Vista Animal Control Center, as well as discussions with Benson and the Bisbee project and any changes that would impact the current United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) \$1.1 million grant.

In response to Chairman Judd's concern, this would add more County buildings and liability. She said the site was listed at \$570,000, but dropped to \$550,000. The warehouse-type building has office space and a future Recreational Vehicle (RV) park to the east of the property will be established. The property is currently not operational as it does not have drainage systems, an appropriate HVAC system, nor adequate parking. Chairman Judd stated the Animal Control Officers were interested in having their own shelter and suggested the Humane Society of Southern Arizona (HSSA) operate it.

Ms. Gilman explained she also spoke with Victoria Yarbrough, Sierra Vista Assistant City Manager, regarding the Sierra Vista Animal Care Center expansion. They are in the middle of a \$2 million project and approximately \$1.5 Million in County funding would be needed if they take on this project. She asked for direction from the board to plan future construction process.

Supervisor English said in the past Sierra Vista was not up front with the board and wanted to be the sole provider. Now that they are looking for funds, she was not interested in working with them. She said the County needed to look for partners and cooperate with the cities to help improve shelters and their capacity.

Ms. Gilman stated the Sheriff's Department held discussions with Benson Shelter leadership, and they been cooperative with HSSA on their support and improvements. The current IGA would need to be worked through to accommodate more space. Chairman Judd said she supports improvements to the Benson Shelter's capacity and was glad to see staff prepare an IGA for board and council approval.

In response to the board's concern of diversifying geographically or increase costs, Ms. Gilman stated any County changes to the project's scope would impact the USDA \$1.1 million grant, particularly any change that moves the project away from the Tovreaville site.

A discussion followed regarding various partners and HSSAs commitment to the Bisbee Shelter. Vice-Chairman stated: "The hard questions need to be asked of the possible partners: timing, experience, cost, etc., then decide. Perhaps all these questions will be asked to be answered at the Work Session of August 22, 2023. Whatever the decision, the animal lovers of the County support HSSA operating their own veterinary facility and animal shelter in Cochise County. We support continued transport from Douglas to HSSA."

In response to the board, Ms. Gilman said she had enough information to move forward with the progress of the Tovreaville Project, the architects, and will continue to pursue other ideas and conversations with other facilities. The board is willing to help in any way if the cost was reasonable and requested Ms. Gilman to keep in mind the \$1.1 million USDA grant expiration date.

Supervisor English suggested an October work session be scheduled for an update on the contracts and an IGA. Ms. Gilman said if something sooner is done, she will bring it to the Board.

Chairman Judd adjourned the meeting at 11:02 a.m.

APPROVED:

Peggy Judd, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sharon Gilman, Interim Clerk of the Board