

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORK SESSION HELD ON  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2024**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, August 13, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

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

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

Attendees: Niltza Flores, Court Administrator  
David Thorn, Presiding Judge, Division III

Vice-Chairman Crosby called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION**

***ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION***

**Board of Supervisors**

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding the process for filling the JP3 Benson vacancy pursuant to A.R.S. § 16-230 (A)(2).

Richard Karwaczka, County Administrator stated the board received a letter indicating that Justice Staggs' last day will be November 12, 2024, requiring the Board to appoint and replacement. Mr. Karwaczka suggested utilizing a similar procedure that the courts have in place for selecting a Judge Pro Tem. Mr. Karwaczka stated the applications will be reviewed and interviewed by a committee set up by the presiding judge, with recommendations passed to the Clerk of the Board and then the board will decide whether to interview candidates or make a direct appointment based on the committee's recommendations. Mr. Karwaczka reviewed the minimum requirements of the position and the potential timeline of the process.

Judge Thorn stated the person has to live within the precinct and be in the same political party as the resigning Judge.

Chairman English emphasized that there is sufficient time to follow all necessary statutes and recommended relying on the judicial process already in place for the selection, with the judicial system conducting initial interviews and making recommendations .

In response to the Board, Ms. Roberts, clarified that ARS 16–230 mandates the Board to make the final appointment decision. Although the statute does not outline a specific

process for this, the board can use the court system's established judge selection process as a guide.

Mr. Karwaczka clarified that while the committee is responsible for vetting candidates and making a recommendation, the final decision on the appointment rests with the board. He stated the board must discuss, vote, and ultimately approve the appointment, as required by statute.

Judge Thorn stressed the need to select the replacement by October to allow for a smooth transition. He noted that it takes time for the new judge to adapt to courtroom procedures, staff interactions, and protocols.

Ms. Flores emphasized that filling the position by October is crucial for maintaining operational continuity and avoiding disruptions.

Mr. Karwaczka proposed scheduling a special meeting on August 19th, 2024 to review and vote on the process for the new appointment. He clarified that the meeting's purpose would not be to make the appointment but to approve the selection process.

Chairman English expressed appreciation for the court's involvement and their existing process for appointing personnel.

Vice-Chairman Crosby adjourned the meeting at 3:23 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board