

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025**

A regular board meeting of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Frank Antenori, Chairman; Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman; Kathleen L. Gomez, Supervisor, telephonic

Staff Present: Sharon Gilman, Interim County Administrator; Joe Casey, Interim Deputy County Administrator; Paul Correa, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney; Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Radford Hyde spoke regarding elections.

Eli Dalton-Webb asked about getting public record computers in Justice Courts and spoke upon the local economy.

CONSENT

Board of Supervisors

1. Approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of April 8, 2025.

County Sheriff

2. Approve renewal of license plates used by the Cochise County Sheriff's Office for undercover and covert operations.

Court Administration

3. Approve the reappointment of Superior Court Pro Tempore, Terry Bannon, pursuant to A.R.S. § 12-141 and A.R.S. § 8-231, and authorize Court Administration to call upon an appropriately appointed Superior Court Judge Pro Tempore from another county in extenuating circumstances, as per A.R.S. § 12-144, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve the reappointment of Superior Court Pro Tempore, Terry Bannon, pursuant to A.R.S. § 12-141 and A.R.S. § 8-231, and authorize Court Administration to call upon an appropriately appointed Superior Court Judge Pro Tempore from another county in extenuating circumstances, as per A.R.S. § 12-144, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Chairman Antenori seconded the motion.

Niltza Flores, Court Administrator, clarified that Judge Bannon is qualified to handle criminal cases and has prior experience. Ms. Flores stated that Mr. Thorne's inability to try criminal cases is addressed through administrative reassignments, ensuring efficient case handling and Judge Keller also steps in when necessary, maintaining continuity in criminal proceedings. Ms. Flores assured that these arrangements do not adversely impact the county court system.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

4. Approve the reappointment of Justin C. Allred as Justice Court Precinct Five Pro Tempore; the reappointment of Gary Ramaeker as Roving Justice of the Peace Pro Tempore; and the reappointment of Charles Price, Gary Douglas Jr., and Nathaniel Redmon as county-wide Justices of the Peace Pro Tempore for emergency or temporary coverage pursuant to A.R.S. § 22-121, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.
5. Approve the authorization to call upon an appropriately appointed Justice of the Peace Pro Tempore from another county in extenuating circumstances, pursuant to A.R.S. § 22-122, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

Elections

6. Approve the appointment of 3 Democratic Party Precinct Committeemen, by recommendation of their Cochise County Party Chairman, to serve through the October 1, 2026 term.

Finance

7. Approve demands and budget amendments for operating transfers.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve consent agenda items 1 and 2, and 4 through 7. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Board of Supervisors

8. Approve Series 10 (Beer and Wine Store) new liquor license application submitted for Dollar General #24755, 5584 S. Santa Elena Avenue, Sierra Vista, AZ 85650.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Series 10 (Beer and Wine Store) new liquor license application submitted for Dollar General #24755, 5584 S. Santa Elena Avenue, Sierra Vista, AZ 85650. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori opened the public hearing and no one chose to speak.

Chairman Antenori closed the public hearing.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

ACTION

Development Services

9. Approval of a Lease Agreement between Cochise County ("Lessor") and Rancho Relaxo Films, an Arizona Subchapter S corporation ("Lessee"), for \$3,750 per quarter minus cost for improvements performed by Lessee as described in the agreement, for a 20-year term of Hangar III at the Bisbee-Douglas International Airport, effective May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2045.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve a Lease Agreement between Cochise County ("Lessor") and Rancho Relaxo Films, an Arizona Subchapter S corporation ("Lessee"), for \$3,750 per quarter minus cost for improvements performed by Lessee as described in the agreement, for a 20-year term of Hangar III at the Bisbee-Douglas International Airport, effective May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2045. Chairman Antenori seconded the motion.

In response to the Board, Ms. McLachlan confirmed the agreement allows for a single 10-year renewal term and includes a clause for early termination. She stated the tenant can exit the lease after two years, provided they give proper notice and there is no penalty for ending the lease early if notice is given, and any improvements made would remain with the property.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

Elections

10. Approve the transfer of general fund contingency funds to the Elections Department to procure two DS950 High-Speed Scanners, in the amount of \$308,000.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve the transfer of general fund contingency funds to the Elections Department to procure two DS950 High-Speed Scanners, in the amount of \$308,000. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Radford Hyde spoke in opposition and discussed the reasons.

Vice-Chairman Crosby stated he agrees with Mr. Hyde.

Supervisor Gomez expressed interest in moving away from voting machines but acknowledged that current law requires their use.

Chairman Antenori explained that the tabulation machines are simply scanners, similar to those used for standardized tests, and are not unusual or inherently problematic. He emphasized that before transitioning to precinct hand counts, the county must redraw precincts, define a secure process, and prepare for potential legal challenges to ensure compliance with elections laws.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 2-1 (Crosby opposed).

11. Approve the transfer of general funds to the Elections Department to procure two Opex 410 Automated Letter Openers, in the amount of \$27,000.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve the transfer of general funds to the Elections Department to procure two Opex 410 Automated Letter Openers, in the amount of \$27,000. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

Facilities

12. Approve a remodel/construction project for the Elections and Treasurer's Offices to improve functionality and operational efficiency, in an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve a remodel/construction project for the Elections and Treasurer's Offices to improve functionality and operational efficiency, in an amount not to exceed \$250,000. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Joe Casey, Interim Deputy County Administrator, explained that the remodel will benefit both the Elections Department and the Treasurer's Office. He stated the changes include expanding the Treasurer's vault for ballot storage and adding two bathrooms, and reconfiguring the space in the Elections Department by removing a hallway, creating room for ballot tabulation and adding an observation room with direct viewing access. He stated the election staff will be relocated closer to the front entrance to improve customer service.

Radford Hyde spoke in opposition and discussed the reasons.

Supervisor Gomez mentioned that discussions about a hand count had begun, but a letter from the Secretary of State warned against even discussing it. Supervisor Gomez stated there will be work sessions to keep the public informed and involved in the process. Supervisor Gomez emphasized that the public will be able to observe and hear about the steps being taken.

Vice-Chairman Crosby emphasized that the issue at hand is more significant than the budget, pointing to what was described as constitutional violations.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION

13. Discussion and possible action regarding state and federal legislative matters listed or described in the attached County Supervisors Association Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, the Arizona Association of Counties (AACo) Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, and the proposed State budget, and other matters related thereto.

Chairman Antenori discussed several legislative updates and infrastructure efforts tied to the state budget process.

Supervisor Gomez attended the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) public hearing regarding the road project connecting the new port of entry to Highway 80. Supervisor Gomez also commented on the reintroduction of the Mexican grey wolf, with a work session scheduled for May 8, 2025, to inform local ranchers.

REPORT BY SHARON GILMAN, INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR -- RECENT AND PENDING COUNTY MATTERS

Ms. Gilman mentioned the county experienced a brief power outage due to a bulldozer incident, but operations remained open to the public. She stated she is finalizing a resolution on the county administrator position and expects to present it to the Board in May. She stated the updates to meeting procedures are also in progress and will be attached to a resolution for an upcoming board review. She stated she is working on an intergovernmental agreement to combine opioid settlement funds from cities in Cochise County for joint projects.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS

Report by District 1 Supervisor, Tom Crosby

Vice-Chairman congratulated Supervisor Gomez on her son's upcoming marriage.

Report by District 2 Supervisor, Kathleen L. Gomez

Supervisor Gomez highlighted the significance of the Mexican Grey Wolf issue and the progress on the commercial port project. She recognized Mayor Jose Grijalva of Douglas for his work in Sonora to build the needed support.

Report by District 3 Supervisor, Frank Antenori

Chairman Antenori deferred his report.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board