PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025

A special meeting of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, July 8, 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

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

Attendees: Stacy Fenhaus, Budget Manager

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 10:41 a.m.

CONSENT

Board of Supervisors

1. Approve demands and budget amendments for operating transfers.

   Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Consent Agenda item one. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Board of Supervisors

2. Adopt Resolution 25-18 to adopt the Final County Budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 in the amount of $293,120,335 (this amount is composed of $110,634,585 in General Fund and $182,485,750 in Special Revenue funds) and approve the Funding Requests as set forth in the attached exhibit.

   Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to adopt Resolution 25-18 to adopt the Final County Budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 in the amount of $293,120,335 (this amount is composed of $110,634,585 in General Fund and $182,485,750 in Special Revenue funds) and approve the Funding Requests as set forth in the attached exhibit. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Supervisor Gomez discussed the reduction in community enhancement funds, which had been lowered from $75,000 to $25,000, and expressed concerns about how those funds were being allocated. Supervisor Gomez emphasized the significant poverty in her district and argued that the funds could help address urgent community needs, particularly in areas like Douglas, which faces high poverty rates. She stated the funds will support local fire departments, community centers, and economic development efforts.

Vice-Chairman Crosby proposed offering an additional $25,000, which Supervisor Gomez accepted. The Board agreed that no further funds would be required from Chairman Antenori, and they decided to proceed with a budget amendment to reflect the change.

Vice-Chairman Crosby presented a series of slides to explain his economic viewpoint. He then used budget data from the Health Department to show that its funding has increased about 54% since FY2020, which he argued is nearly double what would be needed to keep up with inflation.

Ms. Gilman asked to respond more thoroughly at a later time regarding the perceived budget increases. She noted that the Board could still approve the budget today and revisit any concerns about reductions in the future.

The Board and staff discussed concerns about grant-funded positions possibly being shifted to the general fund without approval. The Board and staff agreed to schedule a work session with the Health Department to better understand budget increases and special revenue declines. The Board clarified that the adopted budget is a spending cap and can be amended during the fiscal year, as long as the total amount is not exceeded. Mr. Correa confirmed that Title 11 permits such adjustments, and wording changes to the resolution were not deemed necessary.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing and no one chose to speak.

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing.

Ms. Gilman shared that some minor adjustments were made to specific line items, shifting funds from contingency to cover missed subscription costs. She recommended keeping the contingency fund at around $18.5 million to prepare for any unexpected issues during the fiscal year.

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

3. Truth in Taxation Hearing to receive public comment on the proposed increase in the primary property tax levy for fiscal year 2025-2026.

   Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to have a Truth in Taxation Hearing to receive public comment on the proposed increase in the primary property tax levy for fiscal year 2025-2026. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

   The Board and staff discussed how a small adjustment of $18,624 would eliminate the need for a Truth in Taxation hearing. Ms. Gilman stated it’s possible to find the funds; however, lowering the tax rate now could impact future county revenue and the final decisions about the property tax rate will be made later during the tax rate-setting process.

Ms. Gilman clarified that the purpose of the upcoming vote in August is to set a tax rate that aligns with the already approved revenue projections.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board