

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, January 2, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

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

Staff Present: Sharon Gilman, Interim County Administrator
Joe Casey, Interim Deputy County Administrator
Denise Riden, Civil Deputy County Attorney
Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Vice-Chairman Crosby called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding the County's committee appointments for members of the Board of Supervisors and Executive Staff.

Supervisor Antenori made a motion to begin item one. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Sharon Gilman, Interim County Administrator, presented this item. Ms. Gilman discussed assigning new board and staff members to various committees and commissions. She stated the committees, which include state-level participation, provide access to officials and policy information. She stated with two new board members, replacements are needed for outgoing members, and the associated fees have already been paid for the fiscal year; the appointments are proposed for six months, with flexibility for future changes if needed at the fiscal year.

In response to the Board, Ms. Gilman clarified that multiple members could participate in some organization, but each may require an individual membership fee; like for Arizona Town Hall.

The Board decided to review the committees one by one for better clarity and decisions. The board reviewed multiple committee and membership roles, addressing state and regional organizations with existing memberships and fees.

Ms. Gilman stated the Arizona Association of Counties is a statewide membership requiring no action, while the Arizona Border County Coalition focuses on border economic development and now has new representatives. Ms. Gilman stated Arizona Counties Insurance Pool (ACIP) serves as the County's insurance provider, with the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) designating the County Administrator as the

representative and she as Interim, and Mr. Casey will serve on it until further action by the Board of Supervisors.

Vice-Chairman Crosby's dissatisfaction with ACIP was expressed, with a preference to explore alternative insurance providers.

The Board agreed to maintain the status quo with ACIP. The Board discussed seeking alternatives this year due to budgetary impacts. Ms. Gilman suggested inviting ACIP's executive director to brief the board about their services.

Ms. Gilman stated the Arizona Town Hall membership, which costs \$100 annually.

Ms. Gomez expressed willingness to serve.

Ms. Gilman stated the Association of Defense Communities is a national organization with \$50 membership fee per member, and has traditionally been used for informational purposes.

Supervisor Antenori stated he would like to be a member since he has extensive knowledge of the defense industry and federal matters.

Ms. Gilman stated the Board of Health, with Cochise County Health and Social Services.

Ms. Gomez expressed willingness to serve.

Ms. Gilman stated the Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was established.

Vice-Chairman Crosby expressed his unwillingness to serve on the committee and would like a work session. Vice-Chairman Crosby stated he would remain on the committee until the new fiscal year.

Supervisor Antenori proposed scheduling a work session to review and receive briefings on all intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) the county is part of.

Ms. Gilman stated that given the complexity and volume of these agreements, it might require splitting the discussion into multiple sessions to ensure a comprehensive review.

Ms. Gilman stated the Coalition of Arizona/New Mexico Counties, which includes counties from both states along the border.

Supervisor Antenori expressed interest in engaging with the coalition and gaining further insight into border issues.

Ms. Gilman stated the Corrections Officers Retirement Plan (CORP).

Vice-Chairman Crosby stated that members of the Board requested him to relinquish his position both in CORP and the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS).

Supervisor Antenori expressed willingness to take on both the CORP and PSPRS.

Ms. Gillman stated the County Supervisors Association (CSA) covers services like research and policy analysis, along with legislative support. The Board discussed the value of various county organizations, like AAC and CSA. The Board suggested having

a work session to clarify the different missions of these groups and determine how to make the most of the memberships. Ms. Gilman stated that CSA's Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) also needs a member, and they meet weekly to discuss proposed bills and their impact on counties.

Supervisor Antenori expressed willingness to participate in the LPC.

Supervisor Gomez asked the Board the difference between the Eastern Arizona Counties Organization and Arizona/New Mexico Commission.

In response to the Board, Ms. Gilman stated the Eastern Arizona County Organization (EACO) does not include New Mexico and focuses on networking opportunities for counties in eastern Arizona. She stated it offers a platform for local counties to connect and collaborate. She stated these meetings occur in Phoenix alongside the CSA board meetings.

Supervisor Gomez expressed interest in serving on EACO.

Ms. Gilman stated the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) Local Board operates through the County's Emergency Services office, coordinating with nonprofits seeking aid for food security.

Supervisor Gomez expressed willingness to serve.

Ms. Gilman stated the Huachuca 50 is an IGA involving a shared lobbyist funded by the county and the City of Sierra Vista. She stated the purpose is to support missions related to Fort Huachuca and Washington, D.C.

Supervisor Antenori expressed willingness to serve.

Ms. Gilman stated the National Association of Counties (NACo) is a nationwide organization that advocates for counties at the federal level, focusing on legislation and promoting counties' interests. She stated Cathy Traywick has traditionally been involved with NACo and can offer more detailed information on the organization's activities if needed.

Supervisor Gomez expressed willingness to serve.

Ms. Gilman stated that the Public Lands Advisory Committee (PLAC) is a group for those interested in land management and policies related to public lands.

In response to the Board, Dan Coxworth, Development Services Director, stated the PLAC has been inactive for years, with its focus previously on topics like species reintroduction and its effects on ranchers.

Vice-Chairman Crosby stated that there is a Natural Resources Conservation District, which is a collaborative group that includes representatives from various government organizations, such as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Forest Service, state agencies like Fish and Game, and others. He stated the goal of this district is to address issues related to conservation, land management, and natural resource preservation.

Supervisor Antenori agreed to take a seat on the PLAC and wants to focus on improving discussions and networking with federal agencies regarding access, land management, and resource use.

Ms. Gilman stated that the Southeastern Arizona Contractors Association (SACA) is a local group that offers a networking opportunity for staff to connect with local contractors. She stated Joe Casey will replace Richard Karwaczka on the association.

Ms. Gilman stated Southeast Arizona Economic Development Group is associated with George Scott in Benson. Supervisor Antenori expressed willingness to participate.

Ms. Gilman stated Southeastern Arizona Community Action Plan (SEACAP), is a nonprofit group serving counties like Greenlee, Cochise, Santa Cruz, and Graham. She stated the focus is on housing assistance and resilience efforts in those areas.

Supervisor Antenori expressed willingness to participate.

Ms. Gilman stated Southeastern Arizona Communications (SEACOM), board previously appointed Sheriff Dannels as the representative, but following a change, the sheriff is now an ex-officio member. In response to the Board, no supervisor had been on the board before, and it mainly consists of city managers or administrators. She stated that as a result of the recent changes, she set her name as the interim representative for the Board. She stated that the amendment to the Southeast Arizona Communications board structure now allows the Board of Supervisors to appoint a representative who would be a voting member, whereas the sheriff, previously both chair and voting member, is now an ex-officio member with voting rights only in case of a tie. She noted this change ensures the county has a voice beyond just law enforcement. Ms. Gilman stated the matter will be revisited in the fiscal year. Vice-Chairman Crosby stated the decision about whether to move forward with further representation will be discussed later.

Supervisor Gomez asked to be updated or have a meeting in which the board would have history of what happened in the past regarding IGAs, MOUs and contracts.

In response to the Board, Ms. Gilman stated there will be a lot of work sessions in that regard to bring the board up to date on decisions of the past and the basis for those decisions. Ms. Gilman asked if she would remain on the SEACOM committee and the Board agreed.

Ms. Gilman stated Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO), deals with regional planning, particularly road projects and other related initiatives. Supervisor Gomez expressed willingness to be on the committee.

Ms. Gilman stated Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization, (SVMPO), deals with regional planning, particularly road projects and other related initiatives.

In response to the Board, Mr. Coxworth stated that the SVMPO organization functions as a regional transportation planning body, similar to other regional organizations like PAG (Pima Association of Governments) or MAG (Maricopa Association of Governments). He stated it covers parts of Cochise County and Santa Cruz County, helping coordinate regional transportation efforts. He stated it primarily covers areas like Sierra Vista and the surrounding urbanized regions, but it doesn't include Douglas, Bisbee, or Benson. He said the main focus is on transportation planning within the Sierra Vista urban area and areas likely to become urbanized in the next 20 years, extending up to Benson. Mr. Coxworth noted the county, along with other jurisdictions like the City of Sierra Vista, is a member, gaining access to federal highways and transportation planning resources.

In response to the Board, Jackie Watkins, Engineering and Natural Resources Director, stated the county has benefited from their involvement, as they helped secure funds for

the design of the Moson Road project. Ms. Watkins staff members, Brad Simmons and Travis Fast, are members of the SVMPO working on transportation-related initiatives.

Supervisor Antenori expressed willingness to participate.

Ms. Gilman stated Upper San Pedro Partnership (USPP) is currently assigned to Vice-Chairman Crosby. Vice-Chairman Crosby stated he didn't want to remain on the committee but is willing to remain on the committee for the next six months.

Ms. Gilman stated USPP Partnership Advisory Commission is all three supervisors by default.

2. Review of agenda Items for the upcoming Regular Board of Supervisors meeting.

Ms. Gilman presented this item. Ms. Gilman introduced a new approach with a work session to review the draft agenda, aiming to ensure smoother and more organized meetings. She stated this session allows for addressing questions and fine-tuning processes. Ms. Gilman stated the upcoming regular board meeting begins with a presentation on open meeting law, followed by an acknowledgment of staff member Dan Duchon for earning a credential; and routine consent items, including minor updates and renewals, will also be part of the agenda, along with operational demands.

In response to the Board, Ms. Gilman stated the first two action items regarding voting Chair and Vice-Chair will be moved on the agenda after the call to the public.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a comment concerning items on the consent agenda. He stated that if a member wishes to remove an item for separate discussion and voting, they can inform the clerk, who will relay it to the chair. He said during the meeting, the motion can specify which items remain on the consent agenda while separating others for individual votes. He noted the process ensures that members can address concerns without opposing the entire consent agenda.

Supervisor Antenori stated that in the legislative processes, it's common to include a fiscal note with each bill to clearly outline the financial commitment tied to a decision. He stated the approach provides transparency by summarizing the expected cost, ensuring decision-makers understand the financial implications of their vote.

In response to the Board, Ms. Gilman stated that agenda items with fiscal impacts typically include relevant details in the background information within the AgendaQuick system; while not all items have a fiscal component, those that do will outline the financial implications.

Vice-Chairman Crosby stated that the Agenda Quick program typically includes a section where fiscal impact details are outlined for each agenda item. He stated users can review these details well in advance of meetings, as the program provides access to information like the item's date, presenter, and relevant background. He stated attachments often include additional specifics, including whether there is a fiscal impact and its extent.

Supervisor Antenori made a comment about the importance of transparency in fiscal decisions to ensure taxpayers understand the financial impact of county votes. He emphasized the need for clarity on costs borne by taxpayers, specifying the funding sources—whether from property tax, sales tax, or specific accounts—and how funds are allocated. He stated grants, while funded externally, still require evaluation of conditions

attached and decisions on acceptance and application. He stated the overarching goal is to make it clear how taxpayer dollars are being utilized, even when decisions involve funds originating from other governmental levels.

In response to the Board, Suzanne Hagle, Director, Prevention Services, stated the total amount of the grant for consent agenda item 10, of the existing \$80,000 budget remains unchanged, funds were shifted from salary and employee-related expenses to professional services, which also impacted other budget lines. She stated the amendment also adjusts funding for a position previously funded 100% by the program, now reduced to 80%, with the remaining 20% covered by another grant. She stated the change enabled the reallocation of funds into professional services, allowing collaboration with an external organization to provide prevention curriculum.

Supervisor Gomez emphasized the importance of connectivity and broadband, with a desire for updates on project progress. She stated she needs to understand the status of the broadband projects, questioning their completion percentage.

In response to Board, Mr. Casey stated the current focus is on preparing contractors to apply for Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the state. He stated providers have expressed interest in pursuing these funds to expand broadband infrastructure; the initiative supports those providers in their efforts to bring improved internet connectivity throughout the county.

Ms. Gilman stated public hearings follow a structured process and described the process.

Ms. Gilman stated the IGA with city of Douglas covers monitoring the water at the Bisbee-Douglas International Airport, a service provided since 2012. She stated the price has increased slightly per month, but their arrangement is necessary as the county lacks the internal expertise to handle the water testing. She stated the city conducts regular checks, possibly daily, due to the water treatment facility at the airport.

Ms. Gilman stated there are three Human Resources (HR) policies, two changes and one new policy. She stated the new policy is on traumatic events counseling that the county did not have.

In response to the Board, Jennifer Graeme, Human Resources Director, stated there are seven full-time and four part-time employees. Ms. Graeme also stated that dispatchers can have auditory situations that can be rather traumatic. Ms. Graeme confirmed that individuals have a robust background screening and recently HR is maintaining the City of Sierra Vista's background processes.

Ms. Gilman stated there were inconsistencies throughout the leave of absence policy and therefore edits were made to avoid confusion. Ms. Gilman stated an employee recognition and awards policy was implemented to fulfill a request by the state auditors.

Vice-Chairman Crosby commented on paragraph 3 of the Leave of Absence policy. He stated there may not be a County Administrator, and suggested that the policy might need to be adjusted so that references to the County Administrator are instead understood as the Board of Supervisors.

In response to the Board, Ms. Graeme stated if processes change in the future, policies can be updated accordingly to ensure accuracy.

Ms. Gilman explained the final agenda item consistently focuses on state and federal legislation updates, regardless of whether the legislature is in session; this provides an opportunity for LPC updates and discussion of relevant decisions. She stated county administration also reports on pending matters, followed by each district supervisor sharing updates from their respective districts.

The board discussed adding future agenda items or future work sessions section to the agenda for providing direction on upcoming topics.

Supervisor Gomez suggested that more effort is needed to engage the public effectively and gather substantial input. She stated the plan, which serves as a critical framework for policies on energy, land use, wildlife, housing, and more, requires thorough review and collaboration. Supervisor Gomez proposed to have a work session to allow board members to examine and discuss the plan in detail, emphasizing its importance for guiding decisions over the next decade.

Supervisor Antenori made a request to hold an emergency or special meeting to discuss the pending Supreme Court petition related to the *LaChance v. County* case concerning the jail district. He stated the meeting would focus on the implications of the petition for review and any potential actions required by the county. Supervisor Antenori stated the special meeting should also include discussions with the board's attorney and the procurement lead to reviewing the legal retainer agreement with outside counsel, ensuring all necessary details are addressed and due to open meeting laws requiring 24-hour notice, the meeting needs to be scheduled for either Saturday or Monday. Supervisor Antenori stated he doesn't believe Mr. Correa needs to be present and that there needs to be representation from the County Attorney office, and the procurement representative to review the contract.

Ms. Gilman stated she will have to coordinate with the county attorneys office to get the meeting scheduled for Monday morning. She stated a notice will be posted on Friday, January 3rd, 2025.

Supervisor Antenori requested a work session regarding the jail district's current budget, and to get an update from Chinn Planning.

Supervisor Gomez requested a work session regarding roads.

Ms. Gilman stated there are quarterly meetings with Highways and Engineering and Natural Resources. She stated the next meetings are set for February.

Supervisor Antenori raised concerns regarding the technical issues from the Special meeting on January 2, 2025.

Mr. Casey stated that the Information Technology Department (I.T.) was in the middle of an upgrade in the Board of Supervisors Hearing room and a cable was unplugged, causing the audio outage.

Supervisor Antenori asked about open meeting law validity by not having audio.

In response to Supervisor Antenori, Mr. Casey stated that the lack of audio or video does not invalidate the meeting under open meeting law, as long as proper minutes were taken and posted publicly. Mr. Casey stated that the minutes have to be posted within 24 hours.

Supervisor Gomez stated it's crucial to identify and address the root causes of the

disruptions, such as unstable connections, faulty equipment, or software glitches. She stated that implementing a robust protocol to test and ensure functionality before meetings and having backup systems in place can help prevent these problems.

Supervisor Gomez requested a time frame of when agenda items are typically made available to review, ask questions and prepare for discussions or votes.

In response to the Board, Ms. Gilman stated the final agenda is posted by Friday, which gives supervisors the weekend and early part of the week to review. However, during the week leading up to the meeting, the agenda is still in draft form and subject to changes. She stated supervisors have access to the agenda system to check for updates as things are finalized.

The board discussed the county organization chart and requested a work session to be held with Human Resources.

Vice-Chairman Crosby stated he had a resolution from 2015 regarding the County Administrator. He stated the resolution would provide the necessary background for any decisions related to the County Administrator role with the intent of discussing it in a future work session.

Denise Riden, Deputy Civil County Attorney, informed Vice-Chairman Crosby that he was outside the scope of the agenda.

Vice-Chairman Crosby adjourned the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

APPROVED:

Tom Crosby, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board