

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, March 27, 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, 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 10:00 a.m.

ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding the adoption of meeting procedures for the Cochise County Board of Supervisors.

Chairman Antenori discussed meeting procedures and how they relate to Robert's Rules, and emphasized a more streamlined approach tailored to the County. He referenced Vice-Chairman Crosby's contributions and materials, including an abbreviated version of Robert's Rules and additional modifications to facilitate smoother Board meetings. Chairman Antenori discussed elements of legislative rules, such as roll call votes, ethics procedures, and motions, suggesting the development of a customized rule book for the Cochise County Board of Supervisors.

The Board focused on establishing a clear order for the Board meeting, and debated whether to begin with a prayer before roll call or follow the traditional sequence of roll call, prayer, and pledge. The Board considered allowing both Board members and constituents to offer prayers on a rotational basis, ensuring that all faiths are respected under reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions. The Board emphasized maintaining order and safeguarding the county's interests by balancing free speech rights with the need for a respectful, orderly meeting environment.

Chairman Antenori discussed meeting procedures and various supervisory roles, referencing Robert's Rules of Order and modifications for more efficient Board meetings. Vice-Chairman Crosby provided additional materials, including an abbreviated version of parliamentary rules tailored for small organizations. The Board's discussion emphasized the importance of structured procedures, such as roll call votes, motions, and addressing conflicts of interest, similar to legislative rules, with a mention of potential sanctions for rule violations and the necessity of maintaining order during debates.

The Board and staff discussed the role of the County Attorney in meetings, particularly when and how they should intervene. The Board raised concerns about ensuring the attorney can provide legal guidance without disrupting the flow of discussion or being unnecessarily restricted. The Board debated over open meeting laws, their interpretation, and how they impact the ability of Board members to communicate outside formal meetings. The Board discussed the need for clarity on procedures while maintaining transparency and efficiency in decision-making.

The Board and staff discussed a proposal to allow any Board member to add one item per meeting to the agenda without requiring approval from the chair. The Board discussed the scheduling of work sessions and special meetings. The Board agreed to prioritize meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays to allow staff adequate time for preparation and follow-ups.

Ms. Gilman discussed with the Board the process of refining agenda items to ensure clarity and effectiveness. She explained that while directors submit initial drafts, her office collaborates with the Clerk of the Board to refine the language and structure for board consideration. Ms. Gilman discussed the balance between staff assisting board members with agenda preparation while ensuring that the original intent of the item remains intact. The Board acknowledged that this process would continue to evolve with experience and ongoing collaboration.

The Board discussed concerns about open meeting law and their potential overreach beyond their original intent. The Board noted that there was interest in getting an ombudsman on record regarding certain points and possibly challenging aspects of the law. Staff was directed to refine the draft policy incorporating these discussions, with plans to revisit the updated version in May.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:19 a.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board