

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Friday, April 18, 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

Absent: Kathleen L. Gomez, Supervisor

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

Attendees: Jason Faccio, Public Works Director
Robert Hill, Operations Superintendent Solid Waste
Harold Nixon, Operations Superintendent Fleet
Joe Hutchinson, Operations Superintendent Heavy Fleet
Tammy Ruoff, Business Manager
Stacy Fenhaus, Budget Manager

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Budget Work Session - Discussion of County Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 specifically: Public Works

Jason Faccio, Public Works Director, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Faccio gave a detailed overview of the Solid Waste Division budget and operations in Cochise County. He explained that certain revenue funds, like landfill closure and development, are required by statute to ensure long-term maintenance and expansion. He stated the revenue is also generated through tipping fees, recycling materials like metal and cardboard, and selling recyclables to outside buyers. He stated the department works efficiently to preserve landfill space, sort materials on-site, and even incentivizes staff to separate valuable recyclables to support long-term sustainability.

Mr. Faccio discussed Solid Waste Division expenses, noting that some costs, like the \$500,000 landfill closure expense, are based on liability calculations required by auditors. He stated funds for landfill development are used to maintain transfer stations, with some work contracted out and support from facilities. He stated that waste tire expenses are mostly related to transporting and processing old tires through a state contract with Crumb Rubber Manufacturers (CRM) in Phoenix. He stated the operating expenses include wages, fuel, leases for equipment like printers and porta-potties, and site leases such as the one in San Simon, where the county uses land from the state

due to limited property in the area.

Mr. Faccio discussed light fleet operations, highlighting that a million dollars was saved and reallocated to professional services and road materials, which may allow more road projects. He stated fuel purchasing strategies revealed limited storage capacity and the use of a state contract with Synergy, although some fuel taxes still apply.

Mr. Faccio explained that wages are a major expense, with \$700K going to maintenance staff who currently operate slightly below the ideal ratio of one mechanic per 55 vehicles. Mr. Faccio stated that Joe Hutchison, Fleet Superintendent, handles vehicle purchases by working with dealerships and coordinating with departments like the sheriff's office, although not all requests can be fully met due to budget limits.

The Board and staff talked about leasing options and concluded that buying vehicles is currently more cost-effective than leasing from companies. Mr. Faccio stated that leasing might look cheaper on paper, but it often ends up being more beneficial for the dealer, mainly due to depreciation costs. Mr. Faccio discussed the leasing doesn't offer a financial advantage to the County.

The Board and staff reviewed vehicle mileage by department and discussed identifying underutilized vehicles—specifically those used less than 2,000 miles a year. Ms. Gilman noted that using county vehicles helps reduce liability concerns if an accident occurs during work hours. Ms. Gilman stated liability, optics, and cost-efficiency were all key factors in deciding whether county vehicles or personal mileage reimbursement made more sense.

Mr. Faccio explained how heavy fleet revenues and expenses are organized for departments like Solid Waste and Highways. He stated Solid Waste contributes \$325,000 annually to a fleet-managed fund used for equipment purchases; Highways typically contribute \$1.1 million, but that amount was paused for the current year to use up contingency funds instead. He stated the Sheriff's small heavy fleet budget—around \$20,000—covers maintenance on a few pieces of equipment like a backhoe and forklift, possibly used at the shooting range. He stated fuel, oil, and lubricants for Solid Waste operations are also factored in as part of the operating costs.

Mr. Faccio explained that highway heavy fleet expenses include about \$461,000 for wages and \$75,000 for fuel, oil, and lubricants. He stated oil costs are lower than solid waste due to smaller oil capacities in highway equipment. He stated leaks and blown cylinders can also increase oil usage, especially in solid waste operations. He noted additional costs for highways include \$550,000 for diesel, \$110,000 for tires, \$450,000 for parts, and professional services tied to specialized equipment. Mr. Faccio stated capital plans for the highways include \$1.9 million in equipment, with \$530,000 set aside for a new chip spreader and \$200,000 for a large dump truck.

Chairman Antenori discussed the need for more clarity around which dirt roads are county-maintained and how often they're graded. He mentioned that residents often don't know where maintenance stops or if a road is federally owned. He suggested creating an informational pamphlet showing clearly which roads are maintained, how frequently, and which aren't part of the county system.

In response to the Board, Mr. Faccio noted that the county's GIS site provides information on whether a road is county maintained. He mentioned that this tool is available on the county website for public access. Mr. Faccio agreed that creating an additional pamphlet or resource could be helpful, and the idea would be to supplement existing tools and make the information more accessible and user-friendly.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board