

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, JULY 1, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, July 1, 2025, at 1:00 p.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
Denise Riden, Civil Deputy County Attorney
Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Attendees: Daniel Duchon, Director of Emergency Management

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding proposed updates to Resolution 79-5 (Cochise County Civil Defense and Emergency Services) and Policy 2218 (Emergency Declaration and Resources).

Daniel Duchon, Director of Emergency Management, discussed two key documents: a 1979 resolution outlining the Board of Supervisors' powers, which closely follows state statutes in Title 26, and a 2020 internal policy governing emergency declarations and resource allocation, prompted by pre-COVID considerations. He proposed updates to align with current statutes, suggesting revisions to both documents for clarity and relevance moving forward.

Mr. Duchon recommended updating the resolution language to reflect contemporary terms like "all hazards" and align with current statutes and federal guidance such as the Stafford Act and Homeland Security directives. He stated the resolution was revised to match the updated Title 26 provisions, including Board powers, emergency declarations, and the directors' duties.

The Board and staff discussed how county emergency declarations raise state-level awareness but do not automatically provide funding, often prompting requests for the governor's involvement. Mr. Duchon and others explained that emergencies often cross jurisdictional boundaries, and county action can apply to affected areas regardless of municipal lines.

Ms. Gilman explained that if the Board needed to act quickly during an emergency, an emergency meeting would have to be posted under open meeting law with less than 24 hours' notice. She emphasized that while it can be done, there are specific legal steps

that must be followed, including involving the Clerk and providing justification both before and after the meeting.

The Board and staff reviewed the statute outlining the chairman's emergency powers, confirming that while an emergency meeting is required, it can be posted quickly under open meeting laws. The Board and staff discussed adding procedural language to the resolution, such as requiring Board approval within 24 hours, as long as it doesn't conflict with state law.

The Board and staff discussed how emergency declarations are handled depending on jurisdiction, with city incidents managed by local officials and county emergencies routed through Southeastern Arizona Communications (SEACOM) dispatch to Emergency Management. Mr. Duchon clarified that most declarations are made to acknowledge community impact rather than request outside assistance, and any immediate action by the chair would later be reviewed by the full Board within 24 hours or as soon as practicable.

The Board and staff clarified that declaring an emergency doesn't guarantee funding but allows the county to adjust procurement rules and use its own resources more flexibly. Mr. Duchon clarified that if both the county and governor declare, there's a potential for reimbursement up to 75% through state or federal public assistance programs.

Mr. Duchon explained that the updated section aligns with current statutes and outlines the responsibilities of the Emergency Management Director. He stated the duties include managing emergency plans, accepting aid, administering resources, maintaining inventories, and coordinating with state agencies.

Vice-Chairman Crosby expressed concern about potential government overreach during emergency declarations. He referenced past situations where funding was used to justify or prolong emergency powers, emphasizing the need for caution regardless of good intentions.

Mr. Duchon explained that the updated policy outlines internal procedures for handling emergencies, both before and after a formal declaration. He stated it clarifies how resources and personnel may be reallocated, distinguishing between appointed staff under the county administrator and elected officials who retain autonomy over their own departments. He stated the policy emphasizes coordination through the emergency manager and establishes a clear chain of command during emergencies. He noted it also addresses administrative tasks like tracking expenses, adjusting leave policies, and ensuring proper budgeting through board-approved appropriations.

The Board stated that Mr. Duchon's proposed policy updates, with a tentative plan to vote on the changes on either July 22nd or August 5th, depending on scheduling.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 1:43 p.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board