

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORK SESSION HELD ON  
TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference 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  
Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Attendees: Catherine Traywick, County Treasurer

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

***ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION***

**Board of Supervisors**

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding committee appointments for members of the Board of Supervisors and executive staff for the 2025-26 Fiscal Year and approve continuing annual memberships for 2025-26, with payment of associated dues as described herein.

Ms. Traywick encouraged continued county participation in statewide and national associations like Arizona Association of Counties (AACo) and National Association of Counties (NACo), highlighting their lobbying power and legislative support. She shared her extensive involvement over the years, including on issues like water, immigration, and taxation, stressing how these groups amplify rural county concerns on a larger scale. She highlighted her leadership roles and defended the county's fair back-tax procedure, explaining that strangers paying another's property tax is treated as a gift unless timed to acquire a lien.

Ms. Traywick explained that elected officials often participate in lobbying efforts through groups like AACo and NACo, focusing on key issues such as rural health, public lands, and border-related topics. Concerns were raised about past unauthorized lobbying, particularly regarding election laws, and the importance of ensuring all legislative actions by appointed staff go through the Board was emphasized.

The Board discussed concerns about how legislation is initiated and communicated when county elected officials participate in outside organizations like AACo. The Board agreed that elected officials should be able to advocate for their offices, but the Board emphasized the importance of being informed about any legislative proposals affecting the county. Ms. Gilman suggested that the Board be added to legislative update emails and that a process be created to ensure timely communication of proposed bills.

The Board and staff discussed the role and value of national and state-level organizations

like NACo and AACo in supporting smaller counties with rural issues such as public lands, forest, water, and healthcare. The Board disagreed on whether working with larger, more powerful counties might compromise smaller counties' interests, but experience on Capitol Hill was cited to show that rural concerns are often heard and supported. The Board requested that increased involvement with an emphasis on making sure rural representation remains strong and communication is maintained.

Ms. Gilman shared that County Supervisor Association's (CSA) Legislative Policy Summit will take place October 28–30, 2025 in Yuma. She stated the event gives all county supervisors an opportunity to gather and discuss legislative proposals for the upcoming session.

The Board and staff discussed the Coalition of Arizona/New Mexico Counties, noting limited involvement and unclear benefits. The Board expressed interest in possibly removing it from the membership list and will revisit the matter at a future meeting.

The Board and staff discussed the Arizona Border Counties group, confirming Supervisor Gomez as the representative. Supervisor Gomez stated Pima County covers all expenses, so there are no dues required from other counties.

The Board and staff briefly discussed the Southern Arizona Economic Development Group. Ms. Gilman stated the group focuses on economic development in the northern Benson area. Chairman Antenori is the county's representative and has been actively participating, and the membership fee is \$150.

The Board and staff discussed the Arizona-Mexico Commission and its growing impact on high-tech industries, medical tourism, and cross-border collaboration. Supervisor Gomez stated involvement has included meetings with Senator Gabaldon and efforts tied to the port of entry. She noted the commission also supports regional projects like the port authority board and engages in discussions on topics such as agriculture and infrastructure. Ms. Gilman stated participation costs \$250, and the group helps boost economic activity in border communities.

The Board and staff discussed the Arizona Town Hall, a group known for its wide-ranging membership that includes business leaders, activists, and public officials. Ms. Gilman stated participation provides access to policy discussions and continuing education, with annual events. Chairman Antenori stated the annual membership fee is \$100.

The Board and staff discussed the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) local board and access to related actuarial data and reports.

The Board discussed Southeastern Arizona Community Action Plan (SEACAP) a no-cost social services group focused on promoting self-sufficiency for families in the region. The Board suggested placing SEACAP on a future agenda for further exploration rather than assigning a representative now.

The Board and staff discussed the county's participation in Southeastern Arizona Governments Organization (SEAGO) and the Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization (SVMPO), both of which are federally required for transportation planning and funding allocation. The Board stated SEAGO covers much of the county, helping direct transit and road improvement funds to communities like Douglas, Bisbee, and Benson, while the SVMPO focuses on the greater Sierra Vista area. Board members expressed concerns about federal subsidies and regulations tied to transportation funding, citing historical issues and potential overreach. Board members emphasized the importance of staying engaged to advocate for local priorities and ensure responsible

use of infrastructure funds.

The Board reviewed participation in Huachuca50, noting mixed attendance and ongoing issues with accessing meeting links, which staff will address. Huachuca50 involves lobbying efforts tied to regional defense and infrastructure topics.

The Association of Defense Communities was also brought up, but there was little to no engagement or perceived benefit reported. The Board agreed to place it under consideration.

Ms. Gilman mentioned the final two items relating to water mitigation and policy efforts supporting Fort Huachuca. One of them is the Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network (CCRN) and participation in CCRN comes at no cost to the County. Vice-Chairman Crosby expressed strong concern about the CCRN, Upper San Pedro Partnership, and past water district efforts, calling them attempts to control local water. Vice-Chairman Crosby argued that goals like restoring the aquifer are unrealistic and warned against regional or statewide authorities gaining influence. He emphasized that rather than collaborating, the county should actively oppose such initiatives to protect local water rights.

Ms. Gilman stated that the Upper San Pedro Partnership is less active and its primary funding comes from Fort Huachuca. She stated the County has an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Sierra Vista to contribute \$10,000. The Board discussed concerns about the CCRN, Upper San Pedro Partnership Executive Committee, and Advisory Commission, suggesting all three be placed on a future agenda. The Board expressed frustration over how these entities may bypass state legislative authority and potentially expand federal influence over local land and water. The Board agreed that funding decisions tied to flood control district projects need further review and redirection.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 10:27 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board