

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY JAIL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
WORK SESSION HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Jail District Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, July 23, 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, County Administrator  
Joe Casey, Deputy County Administrator  
Paul Correa, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney  
Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Attendees: Phil Bourdon, Project Manager  
Codi Newsom, Principal-in-Charge, Vanir Construction Management Inc  
Mike Beaber, Project Director, Vanir Construction Management Inc  
Shannon Lobdell, Project Manager, Vanir Construction Management Inc.

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

***ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION***

**Board of Directors**

1. Presentation, Discussion and Possible Direction regarding Owner's Representative Services for the Jail Project by Vanir Construction Management, Inc.

Phil Bourdon, Project Manager, provided an update to the Board, noting that the jail planning study was completed in May 2025. He stated the study outlined the project number of beds needed and identified strategies to help reduce the inmate population. He explained that the next step involves moving forward with design and construction while also implementing recommendations from the study. He stated a qualifications-based selection process was used to bring on an owner's representative, who will serve as a third-party advisor to the Board through the project.

Codi Newsom, Principal-in-Charge of Vanir Construction Management, Inc., shared that she is a licensed engineer with over 20 years of experience and has managed more than \$800 million in justice-related projects, primarily in the public sector. Ms. Newsome emphasized her understanding of the Board's responsibilities and the importance of safeguarding taxpayer funds.

Mike Beaber, Project Director of Vanir Construction Management, Inc., shared that he has 38 years of experience in the detention industry, including 36 years with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. He noted his involvement in delivering over \$6 billion in detention facility projects and highlighted his long-standing collaboration with Vanir, initially as a client and now as a team member.

Shannon Lobdell, Project Manager of Vanir Construction Management, Inc., shared that she has 18 years of experience, all in the role of owner's representative. She emphasized her dedication to public procurement and protecting taxpayer resources throughout the project lifecycle. She outlined the presentation's purpose: to explain the role and value of an owner's rep, provide background on Vanir, and discuss project delivery methods. Ms. Lobdell highlighted Vanir's 60-year history, noting over \$31 billion in projects, including more than 630 justice-related facilities, with over 340 being detention-related. She also pointed out the firm's unique advantage—teams with former law enforcement professionals who bring firsthand operational insight to the design and construction process.

Ms. Lobdell described how the owner's rep fits into the construction process, serving as an advocate for the owner by ensuring that decisions, spending, and timelines align with the project's goals. She stated the role allows the Board to focus on daily responsibilities while Vanir acts as expert eyes and ears on the project. She introduced additional team members, Marlin Feryance, Senior Preconstruction Manager, and Richard Cox, Senior Construction Manager, who bring decades of experience in detention facility operations and construction, reinforcing the team's ability to deliver a safe, efficient, and well-managed facility.

Ms. Lobdell explained that Vanir will act as an extension of County staff, offering expert oversight to ensure the project meets goals for budget, schedule, and stakeholder coordination. She highlighted their focus on risk mitigation, cost control, and transparency, aiming to deliver long-term value through proven processes and independent accountability.

Mr. Beaber emphasized the team's nationwide justice experience and how it brings proven practices to support Cochise County's long-term goals, including durable design and operational efficiency. He explained that Vanir will act as both an advocate and extension of the County, promoting transparency, communication, and cost savings.

Ms. Lobdell presented a 90-day action plan outlining Vanir's initial approach, which includes a kickoff workshop with the Board and key stakeholders to define roles, review the planning report, and establish a project vision. She stated the plan focuses on developing essential tools like a project management plan and a risk management plan, both designed to ensure transparency, structure, and proactive mitigation of potential issues throughout the life of the project.

Mr. Beaber explained that while the Chinn Planning report offers a helpful foundation, the actual project budget will be developed in close collaboration with the Board and the Sheriff's Office. He stated the goal is to establish a realistic baseline budget such as \$120 million while planning for future expansion by designing core infrastructure (like kitchens and medical facilities) to accommodate a larger inmate population and using a modular approach to allow for growth as needed.

The Board and staff discussed recent construction timelines and emphasized that large detention projects can take several years from planning to completion, depending on complexity and delivery method. The Board and staff discussed whether the selection of architects must follow a state-mandated qualifications-based process, but experienced firms can bring in proven designs and cost-saving strategies.

Mr. Bourdon noted that the County must follow state laws when selecting a construction method for public buildings, which limits flexibility compared to private industry. He mentioned options like the construction manager at risk model, which balances

responsibility between the contractor and government. He stated choosing the right delivery method is a key part of the 90-day action plan and will influence the project's speed, collaboration, and overall success.

In response to the Board, Ms. Lobdell emphasized that the main goal is to deliver exactly what the Board envisions while responsibly managing public funds. She stated the team plans to provide guidance on timelines and budgets, ensuring constant communication and transparency. She noted their role includes monitoring costs and reviewing change orders to prevent unnecessary charges and their commitment is to advocate for the County throughout the project to ensure a successful outcome.

Ms. Newsom emphasized that early public engagement, transparency, and thorough planning—such as a 90-day action plan—help build trust and readiness for moving forward with the project.

Ms. Newsom commended the County for evaluating the entire justice system before committing to a major facility investment. Mr. Beaber stated the team intends to assess what's realistic from the Chinn study, acknowledging uncertainties around population reduction programs. He stated the emphasis was placed on designing for current needs while allowing flexibility for future growth.

The Board emphasized the need for transparency and consistent communication throughout the jail project, stressing that all stakeholders, including the Sheriff, the courts, and the public, must stay informed. Chairman Antenori requested a high-level phasing schedule or milestone timeline to support public outreach and provide clear expectations, which the project team agreed could be developed quickly as part of a proposed 90-day action plan.

Chairman Antenori expressed the importance of moving quickly and asked the team to begin outlining the project timeline even before the contract is finalized. He emphasized that having clear construction phases and estimated dates would be valuable for the publicity pamphlet to inform voters about the overall plan.

The Board and staff clarified that the bond amount has not been finalized but is estimated between \$100 to \$130 million. They emphasized the need for honest and accurate estimates for both the bond and the total project budget, especially for inclusion in the publicity pamphlet.

Mr. Bourdon stated the next step is to negotiate a final scope and fee, as required by law, and present it to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Bourdon recommended bringing a proposed plan to the Board as soon as possible to guide progress through the November election. He stated the plan would establish project controls, advisory structures, schedules, and pre-contract preparations so the County could begin design work immediately if the bond is approved.

In response to the Board, Kenneth Bradshaw, Jail Commander, explained that the jail population has remained steady over time, regardless of changes in federal administration. He noted that while border-related crimes fluctuate, other types of offenders, like probation violators, continue to fill beds. He stated the jail sees seasonal spikes, but overall inmate numbers stay consistent.

Ms. Newsom described each construction delivery method, noting that Design-Bid-Build offers a traditional, linear approach; Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) allows for early collaboration and cost control; and Design-Build combines design and construction under one contract for streamlined communication and efficiency. She emphasized the

importance of contractor input during design due to fluctuating material costs and construction options, noting CMAR provides valuable flexibility and collaboration. She also explained the pros and cons of Design-Bid-Build and Bid-Build, which can speed up timelines but may limit owner input, stressing that strong project management is essential to maintain control and balance throughout either method.

Ms. Newsom gave a high-level overview of how contingencies work within a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) contract, explaining that allowances are included to cover design gaps or pricing unknowns. She noted that both contractor and owner contingencies are built into the project budget to manage risk, material cost spikes, or scope changes, all helping to keep the project within the assumed \$120 million cap.

Chairman Antenori proposed setting aside \$10 million from existing tax revenue as a management reserve to cover design, planning, and unforeseen project costs before the tax resumes post-election. He stated the reserve could also offset risks like material inflation, reducing the need to bond for the full amount and potentially helping to pay off the bond early if unused.

In response to the Board, Ms. Lobdell explained that as project risks decrease over time, unused contractor contingency funds can be returned to the owner.

Ms. Gilman stated that the Clerk of the Board has prepared a rough draft of the publicity pamphlet, which currently excludes the pro and con arguments due by August 6. She stated the pamphlet includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), voter information, registration deadlines, and voting locations, with the FAQ section being the most customizable for the jail district question.

The Vanir team shared their experience working on various jail projects. The Vanir team discussed how jail designs vary depending on factors like bed types, population size, and specific needs, emphasizing the complexity of scaling and budget management.

The Board discussed finalizing the contract award for August 5th, contingent on receiving the final scope and fee.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 12:02 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board