

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2025**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, October 2, 2025, at 10:00 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, Telephonic; Kathleen L. Gomez, Supervisor

Staff Present: Sharon Gilman, County Administrator
Joe Casey, Deputy County Administrator
Bert Whitehead, Civil Deputy County Attorney
Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

Chairman Antenori called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Review of agenda items for the Board of Supervisors/Directors meetings and work sessions for the week of October 6, 2025.

Ms. Gilman stated the meeting was to review agenda items for the upcoming regular board meeting and planned work sessions. She noted the Library District meeting is scheduled for Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. She clarified that it will only include demands and no action items are on the agenda. Ms. Gilman stated the Flood Control District has one action item to approve a contract with Rumble Construction for the Bella Vista detention basin project. She explained the land is held by the county through an environmental easement located outside Sierra Vista near Charleston Road. She stated the project is fully grant funded and addresses storm water runoff. Ms. Gilman stated the Jail District agenda includes an item to approve a contract with Combined Public Communications for the InBase voice, video, and tablet communication system. She explained this system is for visitation purposes.

Kenneth Bradshaw, Jail Commander, presented this item. Commander Bradshaw stated the system will not cost the jail any money, as users pay for it. He stated the company was selected through a competitive bid process and will install broadband at all three jails. He stated the system is expected to generate approximately \$8,000 per month in commission and can also be used for remote attorney visits without recording.

Ms. Gilman noted that for the Regular meeting, there are several consent items involving grants from the Cochise County Sheriff's Office to extend agreements through the end of 2027. She stated that under Elections, appointments will be made for two Democratic precinct committee members and poll workers.

The Board and staff discussed that poll workers are drawn from previous volunteers or

online applications. The Board requested a work session to discuss a plan for the 2026 cycle, including signature verifiers and staffing needs.

Ms. Gilman stated Consent items 7 and 8 include a resolution to abandon certain rights-of-way and involves a land transfer related to Taylor Road. Ms. Gilman stated that after demands, there is a routine public hearing for Agenda item 10, for a liquor license. She stated Agenda item 11 and 12, involve Paul Prince, returning with a request related to a previous appeal.

In response to the Board, Matthew Taylor, Planning Division Manager, stated the request involves industrial zoning and two downzones for District 3. He noted there was some opposition from absentee lot owners. He noted their concern is that changing to rural residential zoning could affect development patterns.

The Board and staff discussed Agenda item 13, creating an Opt-Out Month proclamation to recognize Cochise County Opt Out Month. The Board reviewed ongoing issues with unauthorized camping in the county, noting the use of recreational vehicles as permanent dwellings violates land use regulations. The Board discussed exploring ways to manage the community, including possibly encouraging self-policing within the Opt-Out community.

Vice-Chairman Crosby identified concerns about attached buildings, the number of inspections, and potential cost increases. Christine McLachlan, Development Services Director, agreed the topics are complex and merit a dedicated work session. The Board stated the session would review current codes, including the transition to the International Residential Code, and address pros and cons for the community.

Amy Hunley, Clerk of the Superior Court, discussed Agenda item 14, explained a new ticketing service allowing people to schedule appointments online and track wait times. She stated the system provides metrics for customer service and aims to improve office efficiency in both Bisbee and Sierra Vista. She stated funding was requested in the current budget and approved, and an additional grant through the Supreme Court was also approved.

Ms. Gilman stated the Sheriff's Office has three routine grants for approval, Agenda items 15, 16, and 17. She stated one grant, \$25,000, will be used for overtime to address highway safety. She stated Agenda item 17, Operation Desert Guardian, is a reimbursement grant of \$748,000 for equipment purchases.

Niltza Flores, County Administrator, presented Agenda item 18. Ms. Flores explained the judicial selection process, governed by an administrative order and the Supreme Court's code. She stated the committee included two judges, two attorneys, two public members, and a seventh member, with the chair coordinating communication and interviews. She stated four finalists were interviewed; the presiding judge submits a recommendation to the Supreme Court, which reviews the attorney's bar standing and issues an administrative order. She stated the Board of Supervisors approves the candidate; if not, the committee reconvenes to select another, with resumes, cover letters, and questionnaires available for review prior to the decision.

Ms. Gilman reviewed Agenda items 19 and 20 and stated the first item updates a policy clarifying the chain of command for county resources, administrative considerations, and tracking of special revenue fund usage. She stated the second item revises the emergency management resolution, last updated in 1979, to reflect current statutes, definitions, and the Board's authority during emergencies.

Barbara Lang, Health Director, discussed Agenda item 21 and stated that the program focuses on distribution, overdose recognition, and response training, and highlighted a partnership with the jail to help connect individuals to treatment.

The Board and staff discussed federal and legislative matters, focusing on strategy for the upcoming legislative summit with CSA and Yuma. The Board discussed that a work session will be scheduled to review proposals, ensure readiness before bills are filed, and coordinate efforts with legislators and the county attorney's office.

Ms. Gilman noted that the work session on animal shelter agreements scheduled for Tuesday, October 7th, 2025 is being moved to October 21st, 2025 due to an important economic development opportunity with the Arizona-Mexico Commission in Phoenix. Ms. Gilman stated there is a Special Meeting on October 7th, 2025, to certify the Congressional District 7 election results. Ms. Gilman noted that the next meeting on October 9th, 2025, will focus on discussing the county's economic roadmap or guidelines.

The Board and staff discussed that the county has lacked a formal economic development plan for many years. Ms. Gilman stated a retired consultant who helped coordinate economic strategies for Phoenix is willing to assist with a preliminary "roadmap" focused on the county's port of entry. Ms. Gilman stated the proposal, estimated at around \$50,000, would provide guidance on leveraging infrastructure like Highway 191, the airport, and potential rail connections, without being a full-scale economic plan.

2. Discussion and possible direction to staff on proposed meetings, scheduling, and agenda items for future meetings and work sessions.

Chairman Antenori proposed scheduling a work session with Ken Bennett to discuss a resolution allowing scanned copies of ballots in Cochise County to be made publicly accessible.

The Board and staff reviewed upcoming work sessions using a schedule to track requests and confirm dates. The Board and staff discussed work sessions that have been scheduled to address Open Meeting Law legislation, zoning changes near the port of entry and Highway 191, the comprehensive plan, tourism board engagement, and historical monument protections.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

APPROVED:

Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board