

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026**

A regular board meeting of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 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; Bert Whitehead, Deputy Civil County Attorney; Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board

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

***SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS***

**Report by District 1 Supervisor, Tom Crosby**

Vice-Chairman Crosby referenced reports that the FBI is expanding a criminal investigation into suspected election irregularities. He stated that, in his opinion, Cochise County should explore the possibility of the Department of Justice issuing a subpoena for the Cochise County voter list.

**Report by District 2 Supervisor, Kathleen L. Gomez**

Supervisor Gomez announced upcoming community events, including the Mexico–USA Amateur Boxing Show in Douglas on March 21, 2026, at the Cochise County Fairgrounds and Wild West Days in Tombstone on March 14–15, 2026. She also provided an update on the Primary Election timeline, including the candidate filing deadline of March 23, 2026, the voter registration deadline of June 22, 2026, the start of early voting on June 24, 2026, and Election Day on July 21, 2026, for the special elections.

Supervisor Gomez announced a March 20, 2026, comments meeting in Portal with staff to address misconceptions regarding voting centers and precinct voting.

Supervisor Gomez reported on her attendance at the National Association of Counties conference in Washington, D.C., where she met with congressional offices to discuss issues affecting Cochise County, including ports of entry, transportation along State Route 191, and a potential sterile fly distribution center at Bisbee Douglas International Airport (BDI).

Supervisor Gomez reported that she recently met with Tombstone constituents and organizers of the El Tour de Zona event to address concerns about road closures and communication with residents. She stated the meeting helped improve communication between organizers and impacted residents and helped de-escalate concerns.

## **Report by District 3 Supervisor, Frank Antenori**

Chairman Antenori recognized Megan Kennedy, RN at the Cochise County Jail, for being honored by the National Institute for Jail Operations for her outstanding service and in recognition of Women's History Month. He also announced the Arizona Traveling Museum will be in Sierra Vista on March 12, 2026, Tombstone on March 13, 2026, and Willcox on March 15, 2026, and encouraged the public to attend Wild West Days in Tombstone over the weekend.

### ***CALL TO THE PUBLIC***

Allison Morse spoke about various issues.

Dan Baker spoke about various issues.

Christine Atchison spoke about various issues.

### ***CONSENT***

#### **Board of Supervisors**

1. Approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of February 24, 2026.

#### **Finance**

2. Approve demands and budget amendments for operating transfers.

#### **Health & Social Services**

3. Approve CTR070113 Amendment 4, CDC Overdose Data to Action (OD2A), between the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and Cochise Health & Social Services (CCHSS) amendment changes.
4. Approve CTR063847, Amendment 4 Arizona Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention Program, between the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and Cochise County Health & Social Services (CCHSS) amendment changes.

#### **Human Resources**

5. Approve Correction to Vision Insurance Rates for Fiscal Year 2026 - 2027.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Consent items 1 through 5. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **Board of Supervisors**

6. Approve Series 13 (Farm Winery) new liquor license application submitted by Jessica Lynn Ducharme of Twisted Whisker Ranch Vineyard, at 5922 E Highway 80, Bisbee, AZ 85603.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve Series 13 (Farm Winery) new liquor license application submitted by Jessica Lynn Ducharme of Twisted Whisker Ranch Vineyard, at 5922 E Highway 80, Bisbee, AZ 85603. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Ms. Loewenheim presented a Series 13 Farm Winery Liquor License application for Twisted Whiskers Ranch Vineyard in Bisbee and stated that the application met all requirements, received a letter of support with no protests, and staff recommended approval.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing.

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing and no one chose to speak.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

### **Development Services**

7. Approve Resolution 26-06 to Adopt the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan (CP2045), pursuant to A.R.S. § 11-804, following recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to approve Resolution 26-06 to Adopt the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan (CP2045), pursuant to A.R.S. § 11-804, following recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori opened the Public Hearing.

Christine McLachlan, Director of Development Services, presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. McLachlan presented the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan (CP 2045) for final adoption, explaining that it serves as the County's long-range policy framework guiding land use, infrastructure, water planning, transportation, housing, and economic development through 2045. She stated the plan aims to support responsible growth while preserving the County's rural character, protecting natural resources, and aligning development with available water and infrastructure. Ms. McLachlan outlined key elements including water management strategies, transportation improvements, housing opportunities, public services, and economic development tied to agriculture, mining, tourism, and Fort Huachuca. She noted the plan meets state law requirements, was developed through extensive public input, received a unanimous recommendation for approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission, and will replace the County's 2015 comprehensive plan if adopted.

Kim DePew, Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission, commended Ms. McLachlan and Development Services for their work on the Comprehensive Plan.

Joan A. Murphy, spoke in opposition and discussed the reasons.

Allison Morse, spoke in opposition and discussed the reasons.

Vice-Chairman Crosby expressed appreciation for the work of Ms. McLachlan and County department heads and commented on the importance of preserving Cochise County's unique landscape and visibility. He also discussed economic development, including agriculture and mining, and asked staff to explain how new commercial or industrial development is initiated in areas where none previously existed.

In response to the Board, Ms. McLachlan explained that infrastructure improvements, such as road capacity and port of entry expansions, help attract commercial and industrial businesses to an area. She also noted that providing clear land use policies and predictable regulations helps reduce risk for businesses considering investment in the County.

In response to the Board, Ms. McLachlan explained that future amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must go through a public process, including hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. She also noted that existing uses may be protected as legally non-conforming if they complied with regulations at the time they were established.

Supervisor Gomez discussed her proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan, emphasizing the importance of balancing environmental protections with economic development, including support for local workforce opportunities, groundwater and soil testing, and consideration of community impacts from renewable energy projects. She also stressed the need to support traditional industries such as agriculture and mining while encouraging responsible growth that provides jobs and opportunities for residents.

Chairman Antenori explained that under Arizona law, counties have limited authority over industries such as mining, railroads, and water policy, which are largely regulated at the state and federal levels. He emphasized that the county cannot prohibit lawful businesses but can establish reasonable "guardrails" through planning and zoning to protect residents and the environment. Chairman Antenori stressed the need for economic development in Cochise County due to rising costs, flat revenues, declining tourism, and increasing service demands from an aging population. He concluded that attracting new industries and jobs while setting reasonable regulations will help strengthen the local economy and maintain county services.

The Board discussed concerns about the environmental impacts and disposal of renewable energy infrastructure, while emphasizing the importance of planning and zoning guardrails to manage emerging industries such as wind, solar, and data centers. Supervisor Gomez stated that the proposed amendments are intended to protect community resources, provide oversight, and encourage constructive public input to help guide the county's future development. Ronnie Maestas-Condos, spoke in opposition to the data centers and discussed her reasons. Tricia Gerrodette, spoke in support and discussed the reasons.

Chairman Antenori closed the Public Hearing.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to adopt the amendment exhibit B to the Comprehensive Plan. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve agenda item 7 as amended, Resolution 26-06 to Adopt the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan (CP2045), pursuant to A.R.S. § 11-804, following recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

## **ACTION**

### **Board of Supervisors**

8. Approve Community Enhancement Fund expenditures for District 3: 2 Roll-offs for Bowie Community Cleanup, in the amount \$4,000.

Chairman Antenori made a motion to approve Community Enhancement Fund expenditures for District 3: 2 Roll-offs for Bowie Community Cleanup, in the amount \$4,000. Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

9. Approve Community Enhancement Fund expenditures for District 3: Roll-off for Pearce Community Cleanup, in the amount of \$2,000.

Chairman Antenori made a motion to approve Community Enhancement Fund expenditures for District 3: Roll-off for Pearce Community Cleanup, in the amount of \$2,000. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

### **Development Services**

10. [Item Tabled from the December 16, 2025, Regular Board of Supervisors agenda] Approve the San Pedro Ranch Estates Final Plat Docket SUB25-02 with a waiver allowing an unpaved private subdivision road, provided long-term road maintenance and assurance agreements are recorded with the approved Final Plat (Supervisor District 3).

Vice-Chairman Crosby made a motion to remove from the table the item from December 16, 2025, from the Regular Board of Supervisors agenda] Approve the San Pedro Ranch Estates Final Plat Docket SUB25-02 with a waiver allowing an unpaved private subdivision road, provided long-term road maintenance and assurance agreements are recorded with the approved Final Plat (Supervisor District 3). Supervisor Gomez seconded the motion.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

Chairman Antenori removed item 10 from the agenda.

### **Emergency Services**

11. Approve Subrecipient Agreement EMF-2025-EP-05007 for the Emergency Management Performance Grant with the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, in the amount of \$125,000, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

Supervisor Gomez made a motion to approve Subrecipient Agreement EMF-2025-EP-05007 for the Emergency Management Performance Grant with the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, in the amount of \$125,059.50, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Vice-Chairman Crosby seconded the motion.

Dan Duchon, Emergency Management Director, presented this item. Mr. Duchon stated that the annual grant from the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs supports the county's local emergency management office. He stated the grant provides about \$125,000 with a 50% county match, totaling approximately \$250,000, and funds two employees as well as vehicles, cell phones, and office supplies.

Chairman Antenori called for the vote and it was approved 3-0.

### **STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION**

12. Discussion and possible action regarding state and federal legislative matters listed or described in the attached County Supervisors Association Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, the Arizona Association of Counties (AACo) Legislative Policy Committee Agenda, and the proposed State budget, and other matters related thereto.

Chairman Antenori informed the Board about proposed state legislation related to opioid settlement funds and county expenditure limits. He explained that some counties have reached their spending limits and cannot use the settlement funds, so lawmakers are considering a bill to exempt opioid settlement spending from the penalty for exceeding those limits.

The Board discussed the status of several state bills, including one related to tax relief for orchards and vineyards and another proposal concerning a gas tax change that could affect highway user revenue funds used for road maintenance. The Board discussed election-related issues and noted that the Arizona Secretary of State was expected to visit Sierra Vista to meet with local chamber members and community leaders.

### **REPORT BY SHARON GILMAN, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR -- RECENT AND PENDING COUNTY MATTERS**

Ms. Gilman reported that the County is addressing the situation involving protected ocotillo plants at the new jail site. She explained that staff obtained a harvesting permit from the Arizona Department of Agriculture and plan to competitively bid for the removal of the plants due to their value, ensuring the process is handled properly. Ms. Gilman reported that the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the architect for the new jail project has been released. She added that a work session will be held on March 18 to update the Board on all aspects of the project.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board