

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY JAIL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
WORK SESSION HELD ON  
TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026**

A work session of the Cochise County Jail District Board of Directors was held on Wednesday, March 18, 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, Telephonic

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

Attendees: Mike Beaber, Vanir Director  
Shannon Lobdell, Vanir Project Manager

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

***ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION***

**Board of Directors**

1. Presentation and discussion regarding the current status of the Cochise County Jail Project.

Mr. Casey reported that eight architectural firms attended a recent site walkthrough, indicating strong interest and engagement in the project. He added that staff is developing the Phase Two Scope of Work, which is expected to be presented to the Board for approval in about three weeks.

Mike Beaber, Vanir Director, noted that attendance at the site walk was not mandatory, so additional firms may still choose to compete despite not attending. He added that the firms who did participate were strong, resulting in a competitive pool.

Shannon Lobdell, Vanir Project Manager, presented the Jail Project status by PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Lobdell provided an update on project progress, noting ongoing weekly coordination meetings over the past six months and outlining key milestones, including approval of the design-build method, development of the criteria architect Request for Quote (RFQ), and creation of a public project update blog. She added that recent efforts include defining the geotechnical scope of work and publishing the RFQ on March 2, 2026.

In response to the Board, staff explained that geotechnical work involves testing and analyzing soil conditions, including composition, compaction, and suitability for construction. They added that this preliminary analysis helps inform design decisions, with more detailed studies to follow once the project team is selected.

Ms. Lobdell reported that geotechnical and environmental scopes were sent out for vendor pricing on March 5, 2026. She noted on March 17, 2026, a project site walk was conducted. She outlined the criteria architect timeline, including an April 2, 2026 submission deadline, interviews by April 27, 2026, final selection by April 30, 2026, and anticipated Board approval of a contract by May 19, 2026.

In response to the Board, Ms. Lobdell explained that the environmental scope includes researching potential cultural considerations, including reviewing databases to identify any site-specific requirements. She noted this may include evaluating the presence of culturally sensitive areas, such as Native American burial sites, and determining whether further investigation is needed.

The Board and staff discussed that specialized databases are used by professionals to identify any cultural, environmental, or ecological concerns, such as protected wildlife or plants, to ensure compliance with all regulations. Mr. Casey noted that while some site conditions like the presence of ocotillo were already known and addressed, the formal environmental study is still pending and out for vendor proposals.

The Board and staff discussed the selection process, noting that a committee will evaluate and shortlist the most qualified vendors based on their submissions, experience, and past performance, including reference checks. Staff emphasized that qualifications, cost control, project outcomes, and team experience will be key factors, with further coordination expected between the selected architect and the design-build team.

Ms. Lobdell provided an update on the geotechnical and environmental timeline, noting that scopes were issued for pricing on March 5, 2026, with responses due March 20, 2026, after which a vendor will be selected to handle both services. She stated that the overall project timeline including overlapping phases to maintain progress, with current projections of completion around August 2029.

Ariel Monge, Cochise County Detention Captain, explained that facility inspections will involve both internal staff and external professionals, including the State Fire Marshal, to identify any issues or deficiencies. He also noted that while some settling has affected existing infrastructure like sewer lines, a full assessment would require formal studies.

Ms. Gilman explained that bond issuance will likely occur closer to the start of construction to avoid unnecessary interest costs, as the funds will primarily be used during that phase. She added that the County will begin working with Stifel using early tax revenue data after the jail tax resumes in July 2026, along with outreach efforts to ensure businesses are informed.

The Board and staff discussed the potential use of the Greater Arizona Development Authority to help offset project costs, including bond issuance fees. Supervisor Gomez noted the organization could provide financial support for certain aspects of the project, though it may be limited in scale and still requires further coordination. Staff will continue working with both the authority and Stifel to determine how these funding sources can best be utilized.

The Board and staff discussed proposed procurement legislation, noting that while current RFQ processes for the project should remain compliant, smaller projects could be impacted by stricter bidding requirements. The Board also discussed a separate bill that may be revived despite concerns about revenue impacts on rural

counties. Ms. Lobdell acknowledged potential construction cost increases due to inflation and market factors, noting Vanir will continue monitoring and planning to minimize impacts.

Chairman Antenori explained that certain financing entities can leverage pooled funds from state and county treasurers, investing idle funds to generate returns and provide lower-interest financing without relying on traditional bond markets. He noted this approach could reduce borrowing costs compared to issuing bonds through the broader market.

Chairman Antenori explained that an upcoming work session will review bonding options, including comparing different financing approaches and potentially combining them to determine the most cost-effective strategy. He stated the goal is to secure a lower interest rate and evaluate repayment options, including standard versus accelerated payoff, while considering potential penalties and financial risks. He emphasized that the final decision will depend on balancing taxpayer cost, revenue reliability, and overall risk.

Chairman Antenori adjourned the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Frank Antenori, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Lara Loewenheim, Clerk of the Board