

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON  
Tuesday, November 10, 2015**

A special meeting of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Conference Room, 1012 N. G Avenue, Douglas, Arizona.

Present: Richard R. Searle, Chairman; Patrick G. Call, Vice-Chairman; Ann English, Member

Staff Present: James E. Vlahovich, County Administrator  
Edward T. Gilligan, Deputy County Administrator  
Arlethe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board

Chairman Searle called the meeting to order at 9:23 a.m.

**ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**THE ORDER OR DELETION OF ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION AT THE MEETING**

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***ACTION***

**Board of Supervisors**

***DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE DIRECTION on the FOLLOWING:***

1. Past Year Accomplishments and Current Projects
2. Budget Status and Significant Budget Issues
3. Board Meeting Protocol and Procedures
4. PSPRS Status, Projections and Impacts
5. General Employee Issues, Including Employee Recognition, Compensation, and One-time Distributions and Alternatives
6. Cochise Combined Trust—Status, Program Reviews and Issues
7. Impact of Impending Development on County Offices, Including JP3
8. Federal Agency Reviews
9. Current and Upcoming Issues for Specific Departments and Offices, Including IT, Elections, Board, Library District, HR, Facilities, Solid Waste, Sheriff, Recorder, Community Development, Finance, Health, Emergency Services and IDC
10. Jim's Journal
11. Individual Supervisor Suggestions for Future Projects/Issues for Board Staff to Research

Mr. Vlahovich gave the Board the following handouts: spreadsheet of the current budget for the Cochise Combined Trust noting Humana Vitality would be the new provider; a list of 2014-2015 accomplishments and projects for the County; a list of the seven primary focus areas the County's budget Committee; and a Memorandum from the Finance Director: Lois Klein regarding the Upper San Pedro Partnership Budget for fiscal year 2015/2016. He also noted that all departments had been contacted to ensure the list of accomplishments and projects were accurate.

Vice-Chairman Call asked Mr. Vlahovich to go through the high points as the Board had previously reviewed the list.

Mr. Vlahovich said that the major points were: Budget process, Budget Committee, Strategic Plan update, Employee Compensation, Microwave Project, and the Privatization of the Solid Waste System. He also noted that the purpose of the retreat was to get the Board's direction and focus for the next 12 months.

Chairman Searle asked what the current status of the budget was.

Mr. Vlahovich said that State shared revenues were down 1% and half cent sales tax was down 8%, which is of major concern.

Chairman Searle asked if the cities had seen similar decline.

Mr. Vlahovich said that staff would find out how the cities tax collections were doing. He also said that if the Johnson Mine sold that would bring in an estimated \$3,500,000 in back taxes.

Chairman Searle said that the company who was going to purchase the Johnson Mine had sent out a press release stating that the sale is still on track for closing by the end of the year.

Mr. Vlahovich said that the Johnson Mine sale would be great for the County's revenue. He moved on to the Restoration to Competency program costs and said that the agreement with Pima County went up to \$30,000 this fiscal year and was expected to increase to \$40,000 next fiscal year. He said that Mr. Eric Silverberg, Court Administrator was working on getting psychiatric care locally to avoid these costs and deal with mental health issues with local programs.

Supervisor English asked about the status of the jail medical staff.

Mr. Vlahovich said that it is a difficult area to keep staffed, but since putting Ms. Cathy Maddux in charge the issues had decreased and noted that once Ms. Maddux received her nurse practitioner license at the end of the month, the County would no longer have to cover the costs of an on call doctor.

Mr. Gilligan said that it was a small team running jail medical and a big issue was that medical techs could not perform nurse tasks, which increased overtime costs.

Supervisor English asked if there was a solution to address these issues.

Mr. Gilligan said that he was working with Human Resources and the Health Department to consolidate lower tech positions to get a nurse position, which would add a full time nurse for shift coverage. In addition county administration was exploring contracting medical services at the jail and building an on-call pool for nurses.

Supervisor English asked if there was a timeline for this issue.

Mr. Vlahovich said a plan should be implemented in the next three to six months.

He said that a second round of decision packages would also be submitted within the next two months to address issues like the Court Video Project, Exercise Room in Douglas Service Center, and Facilities Repairs.

Chairman Searle asked how these decision packages would be funded.

Mr. Vlahovich said that he had put aside \$10,000,000 to address any additional decision packages needed before the next fiscal year.

Vice-Chairman Call asked if there were any ongoing costs associated with the courts video project.

Mr. Vlahovich said he would find out about any ongoing costs from Court Administrator Eric Silverberg.

Vice-Chairman English asked about the court video system countywide.

Chairman Searle said that they did have video capability, but they would need to do an upgrade to ensure proper connection. He asked Mr. Vlahovich to find out the status on the court video system.

Mr. Vlahovich moved on to discuss a one-time distribution for County employees. He said he recommended waiting until tax revenues increased. He also said that he planned to do a premium holiday from the Cochise Combined Trust health insurance cost to employees and a \$250 rebate as well to reward employees for staying healthy during the year.

The Board told Mr. Vlahovich that they fully supported his plan to reward employees for staying healthy and directed Mr. Vlahovich to re-visit the one-time distribution if tax revenues improved.

Supervisor English said that she did not want employee evaluations tied to monetary distributions because that does not help employee growth. She asked Mr. Vlahovich to ensure that department directors were doing employee evaluations on a regular basis.

Mr. Gilligan said that with the new administrators in place it would be easier to have directors and supervisors stay on top of evaluations. The new organization chart model would also be fundamental in creating a model for leadership and accountability.

Chairman Searle asked if there is a review process for evaluations.

Ms. Rios said that employees can have County Administration review their evaluation if they disagree with their supervisor/director.

Supervisor English said that addressing the current salary structure would assist with more accurate evaluations.

Mr. Vlahovich moved on to the water budget and said that a total of \$104,000 was spent on this effort annually to fund the Upper San Pedro Partnership, groundwater monitoring by the US Geological Survey, Water Wise Program, and the toilet rebate program. He discussed the new budget process would be more structured and asked if the Board was interested in meeting with departments to discuss their budgets. The Board also requested that Mr. Vlahovich coordinate a work session to discuss water issues in more detail.

The Board said they would like to have budget meetings with departments, but requested that direction and guidelines be given to departments on what would be discussed as well as asking all departments to refer to the strategic plan for their budget goals.

Mr. Gilligan said that the new budget process would focus on performance, population, and customer service. County Administration would also require each department to submit an annual report with goals that were in line with the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Vlahovich said that another key factor in the new budget process would be the new finance director. He noted that there were three candidates coming in for second interviews.

The Board asked Mr. Vlahovich to involve them in the process.

Chairman Searle asked about the fund line to cover water issues and other environmental issues and suggested that it be renamed to a more general subject since water issues are not the main focus.

Supervisor English asked for maps to show irrigation non-expansion areas in the County and also asked how much was spent on professional services for Ms. Kim Mulhern and Ms. Mary Darling.

Mr. Vlahovich said that last year the County had spent around \$70,000 for Ms. Mulhern and Ms. Darling's professional services.

Supervisor English asked for staff to track all environmental issue costs.

Chairman Searle also asked staff to reevaluate Ms. Darling's duties for the County and only use her services when needed. He suggested that County staff take over forest service meetings.

Ms. Rios spoke on board security protocol, agenda items, and access to board meetings through mediums.

The Board requested a board security policy be drafted and that all other processes stay in place as they seemed to be working fine.

Mr. Gilligan detailed the tasks that the budget committee would be working on: facilities, outsourcing, services, software systems, organizational realignment, corrections reform, and benefits.

Supervisor English asked if there were other areas in the County where inmates were used for janitorial services.

Mr. Gilligan said that inmates were not used in a lot of businesses, but staff would look into other ways they could be used.

Mr. Vlahovich asked the Board if they had any topics they wanted to focus on during the upcoming year.

Vice-Chairman Call said that he was interested in looking at technological tools to help employees provide better services to the citizens. He suggested looking into what other rural counties are doing.

Chairman Searle said that staff should also look at partnering with other rural counties in other areas.

Vice-Chairman Call suggested having meetings with Santa Cruz, Graham, and Greenlee counties to work on partnerships.

Mr. Vlahovich said he would begin looking at inter-county partnerships.

He moved on to future projects staff had pending for 2016 and noted that updating fee schedules would be a major focus, as well as looking at a transportation tax process.

Mr. Gilligan added that employee compensation would also be a topic of discussion.

Mr. Vlahovich stated that staff would also be focused on the payments into the Public Safety Retirement System and look at how other entities were addressing the high cost.

Mr. Gilligan noted that a major component was who was hired by the County's Sheriff Office; hiring inexperienced officers reduced the cost and hiring experienced officers raised the cost.

Mr. Rios asked the Board about a security protocol/policy for board meetings.

Chairman Searle said that a formal security protocol should be in place to ensure staff responded to security issues in a consistent manner.

Vice-Chairman Call moved on to Board agendas and said there had been no issues with item placement; he said current board protocol on audio/video of the meetings was working.

Supervisor English noted that if need be the Board could ask for agenda items to be moved for discussion purposes.

Mr. Vlahovich discussed federal agency issues, specifically: projects handled by consultants Mary Darling and Kim Mulhern; Sentinel Landscape Projects; and the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA)

Supervisor English moved on to employee recognition and noted that the current program needed to be updated.

Mr. Gilligan said he wanted staff to move to a program that focused on recognizing excellence, not just tenure.

Ms. Rios noted that the Culture Committee was currently working on revamping the employee recognition program and once that was complete it would be rolled out in 2016.

Mr. Vlahovich moved on to cover the Cochise Combined Trust. He noted that they had an \$8,000,000 surplus and that although it was a good amount a catastrophic illness for one employee could drain it down.

Chairman Searle asked if there was a wellness portion to the health benefit and if it could be used with private providers.

Mr. Vlahovich said that there was a wellness portion and said staff would look into where it could be used.

He gave brief updates on: property acquisition in Benson; new organization chart; vehicle use policy; strategic plan refresh; joint dispatch center; regional evidence storage facility; Cochise County Recharge Network; court consolidation/animal shelter agreements; Lisa Marra's new role; county fair participation; and social media/communications direction.

Chairman Searle asked if a location had been chosen for the joint dispatch center.

Mr. Vlahovich said that staff was still working with the Sheriff's Office and other affected entities in choosing a location.

Vice-Chairman Call asked that the Board be kept up to date on the development of the joint dispatch center.

Mr. Vlahovich said he would keep them in the loop.

Chairman Searle asked if staff had a list of County facilities.

Mr. Vlahovich said that he would have staff get a list together.

Vice-Chairman Call said staff should continue to work on recharge projects.

Chairman Searle said that selling properties not useful to the counties should also be a priority since the process is lengthy. He added that the County airports also needed to be looked at for economic development purposes.

Mr. Vlahovich said that staff was looking at lease agreements for the hangars and would be meeting with interested parties.

The Board asked Mr. Vlahovich to set up a work session to discuss the County's airports.

Vice-Chairman Call asked about employee participation at the County Fair.

Ms. Rios noted that it had been declining over the last five years as had the resident's participation.

The Board directed staff to scale back presence at the fair by only showcasing departments that provide external services.

Mr. Vlahovich moved on to communication and community outreach issues. He said Ms. Lisa Marra would be handling these issues and asked if the Board had any specific direction regarding Ms. Marra's duties or focus.

Vice-Chairman Call said that he would like the County's website to be looked at.

Mr. Gilligan said that he would work with staff to create a template of what each department will put on the website in order to keep information consistent.

Supervisor English noted that she would handle all public relation issues in her district.

Mr. Vlahovich moved on to discuss IT concerns; specifically staff issues, major projects, contracts, and filling the vacancy for a new IT director.

Supervisor English said that staff had to ensure that the Motorola contract kept moving forward.

Mr. Gilligan said that staff would be meeting with them to ensure the project moved forward and a timeline was set.

Mr. Vlahovich moved on to Elections and said that Ms. Katie Howard, the current Elections Director, was set to leave after the 2016 general election and staff did have a plan to address her vacancy, which would include hiring Ms. Martha Rodriguez as the interim after Ms. Howard's departure to give her an opportunity in the director role. He noted that a recruitment could be done if necessary.

He also added that staff was working with Ms. Lise Gilliland, Library Director, to make cuts to her budget and that Human Resources was down two analyst positions, which made recruitment timelines longer.

The Board requested that the New Employee Orientation schedule be added to their calendars for 2016.

Mr. Vlahovich said he would have staff add those dates and noted that staff was also trying to keep vacancies open for six months to help with the budget shortfall.

Mr. Gilligan said that staff was also working on an inmate policy that is aligned with the Department of Corrections to ensure everyone is getting the best deal for the staff and time invested.

Mr. Vlahovich then discussed leadership strategies for staff.

The Board agreed that a formal leadership structural academy should be put in place and recommended allowing employees to attend statewide training programs for leadership, as well as coming up with a regional approach with neighboring counties. They also requested that staff partner on IT projects with other cities in the County.

Supervisor English noted that she would also encourage staff to use National Association of Counties (NACo) trainings for employees.

Mr. Gilligan moved on to policies and said the Drug and Alcohol policy needed to be redone.

Mr. Vlahovich gave an update on the: recruitment for the Facilities Director position; utility audits being addressed by the Facilities Department and staff doing research to find out where cost savings exist.

Vice-Chairman Call said that he was interested in saving money with utilities, but wanted to ensure that any investment made had a good return.

Mr. Vlahovich said that staff was also looking at implementing a work order system for facility requests similar to the one used by the IT Department. He then updated the Board on the Solid Waste Management Department and said there was only one response to the request for quote on privatizing that service. He moved on the Sheriff's Office and said they were addressing coverage at the jails by using retired Department of Correction workers to be on call. He added that beginning in 2016 the Detention Officer Pay Plan would no longer be funded by the jail enhancement fund, but would instead come out of the General Fund.

The Board asked Mr. Vlahovich to find out how much funding the Detention Officer Payment Plan would affect the General Fund.

Mr. Vlahovich said he would get a cost from Finance.

He moved on to other issues: The Recorder's Office requesting adjusting salaries for their employees; Mr. Paul Esparza, newly appointed Planning & Zoning Director starting on November 16th; Interviews for the Finance Director position; and possibly moving the Financial Services Manager position to the Finance Department. He added that staff was also looking at combining some functions to ensure efficiency countywide: specifically job sharing between emergency services and bioterrorism and moving the risk management function to a more central department.

The Board agreed with combining of positions and encouraged staff to look at all vacancies as opportunities.

The Board thanked County Administration for the status update and requested quarterly retreats.

Chairman Searle adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Richard R. Searle, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Arlethe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board