

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
Tuesday, May 17, 2016**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in the Range House Conference Room, 205 N. Judd Drive, Bisbee, Arizona.

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

Staff Present: James E. Vlahovich, County Administrator
Edward T. Gilligan, Deputy County Administrator
Mark Dannels, County Sheriff
Arlethe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board
Thad Smith, Deputy County Sheriff
Mike McGinnis, Budget Manager, Finance Department

Attendees: Nike Noack
Ken Wallace
David Raber
Carol Capas
Ken Bradshaw
Mark Genz
Tom Alinen
Rea Anne Servia
Kelley Jones
Curtis Wilkins
Jen Lavelle
Lori Nichols-Wright
Tod Linendoll
Allison Hadfield
Steve Ziegler
David Noland
Dan Keil
Luis M. Hernandez
Sean Gijanto
Tim Williams
Ken Foster

Vice-Chairman Call called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.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

INTRODUCTIONS

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and possible direction regarding the Sheriff's Office Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget and the Sheriff's Office pay plans, the pension plan - Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS), and grants.

Mr. Jim Vlahovich, County Administrator, gave the background on the work session and said that staff had been very collaborative with the Sheriff's Office on moving projects forward: evidence storage and microwave project. He noted that staff had a meeting last week to discuss pay plan requests with the Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Mark Dannels said he had been working with county administration to address issues on budget, retirement plans, and salaries.

Lieutenant Curtis Wilkins, Sheriff's Office, used a PowerPoint presentation to go over the current statistics of Sheriff Office salaries. He said that Cochise County fell in the middle when it came to the economy compared to other counties in the State. He listed salary comparisons for the salaries that were below market value and added that although one time distributions are helpful, they do not address the bigger issue of cost of living for County employees. He said in order to do a fair comparison, Sheriff Office employees should be compared to other counties sheriff offices. He listed other county salaries and noted that even though the economic comparison was at mid point, the actual County salaries were at the bottom. He briefly discussed the Public Safety Pension Retirement System (PSPRS) and gave some data about how the retirement system functions. He ended his presentation with a request that the County address low paid employees to help with retention.

Commander Tom Alinen, Sheriff's Office, said he was very concerned with salaries for secretaries and dispatch staff and added that by combining the dispatch centers of several government entities, salaries for dispatchers would be a topic of discussion for equality.

Commander Mark Genz, Sheriff's Office, stated that the cost of living had to be a factor in adjusting salaries to ensure employees who do not want to advance can still maintain their lifestyle.

Commander Ken Bradshaw, Sheriff's Office Jail, said that although the detention officer pay plan put in place a couple of years ago was helpful, the top salaries for advancement needed to be addressed.

Deputy County Sheriff Thad Smith stated that it was difficult to explain to employees that the County did not have the funding to address salaries, when other agencies in the area have had raises. He noted that it had been helpful to have staff have a better understanding of the PSPRS system and he looked forward to working with County Administration to continue to address concerns over the system. He added that he was in support of an annual pay plan to address employee salaries, instead of doing it every decade when the issue becomes

overwhelming.

Sheriff Dannels stated that his staff had changed many processes over the last four years, which impacted organizational development, retention of employees, and training opportunities. He noted that he continued to look for grants to help the County cover operational expenses and recruited over 100 volunteers to assist with his mission. He also said that he supported a strategic plan budget in order for the County to take care of its employees.

Mr. Vlahovich said he appreciated the work and data collected by the Sheriff's Office regarding salary concerns and said County Administration was committed to include the Sheriff's Office in the compensation plan. He added that he would also reach out to a PSPRS representative to continue the discussion of unfunded liability.

Supervisor English said that she understood the salary concern, but noted that the County has a limited amount of money and the first priority has been employees when the County has had extra funding. She added that the Board has put money towards adjusting salaries, but that has been a slow process. She stated that the Board was looking into a compensation plan to address all County employee concerns and that it would not be fair to just address one office.

Vice-Chairman Call said that the responsibility of the Board was to address salary concerns for all County employees and noted that the Board also supported economic development efforts to bring in more revenue.

Chairman Searle said that his sentiment echoed that of the other Board members and he appreciated concern from all directors and elected officials regarding staff salaries.

Mr. Vlahovich noted that the overall budget meeting with the Board would be held on May 23rd and he encouraged the Sheriff's Office to attend as more information would be available at that meeting.

The Board thanked Sheriff Dannels and his staff for the update.

Vice-Chairman Call adjourned the meeting at 1:56 p.m.

APPROVED:

Richard R. Searle, Chairman

ATTEST:

Arlthe G. Rios, Clerk of the Board