

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
TUESDAY, JUNE 29, 2021**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, June 29, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Executive Conference Room, 1415 Melody Lane, Building G, Bisbee, Arizona.

Present: Ann English, Chairman; Peggy Judd, Vice-Chairman; Tom Crosby, Supervisor

Staff Present: Richard G. Karwaczka, County Administrator
Christine Roberts, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Kim Lemons, Clerk of the Board
Camila Rochin, Public Information Officer

Attendees: Christine McLachlan, Planner II
Kris Carlson, Civil Deputy County Attorney
Jackie Watkins, Eng & Natural Resources Director
Mark Apel, Environmental Projects Coordinator
Dan Coxworth, Development Services Director
Michelle Johnson, Planner, City of Benson

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

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

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

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Board of Supervisors

1. Discussion and Possible Direction regarding a report on Cochise County Growing Water Smart Action Plan, how it works with the Board of Supervisors' (BOS) Strategic Plan concerning water issues, and on how the BOS may play a role in this action plan.

Vice-Chairman Judd introduced the item and the team working on the Growing Water Smart Action Plan (Plan). The team includes Vice-Chairman Judd, Ms. McLachlan, Mr. Carlson, Mr. Apel, and Ms. Johnson. Ms. McLachlan presented using a PowerPoint presentation. She reviewed the Growing Water Smart process and the outcomes of the workshop that the team participated in. She detailed the Plan's goals, action steps and associated partnerships. Goals include: standardize policies across jurisdictions and collaborative activities; increase agricultural water efficiency; update codes/policy changes; and, increase water recharge. She detailed the decrease in water usage in Sierra Vista since 2000 and reviewed next steps. Ms. Johnson discussed Benson's educational campaign.

The Board and staff held a detailed discussion on a wide variety of topics related to water issues and the Plan. Areas of focused discussion included: excess groundwater use; agriculture; the need for assistance in various communities; wells drying up; local water districts; Water Wise educational opportunities outside of Sierra Vista; and, potential funding sources to assist communities, including the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Potential uses of ARP funding will be discussed at an upcoming Work Session. The Board discussed the level of County involvement with the Plan and their opinions on the role of the County, and government in general, in water issues.

Ms. Watkins discussed in detail the Upper San Pedro Basin Recharge and the Palominas Flood Control and Recharge projects. She has received requests from farmers for recharge projects on their property; with Board approval, the Flood Control District could investigate and assist with projects on private property. The Board and Ms. Watkins discussed this further.

The Board and staff continued to discuss the Plan. Areas of focused discussion included: incentives, such as the Toilet Rebate program; the history of the Upper San Pedro Basin Recharge project; limiting the County's role with the Plan; the Plan in relation to the Strategic Plan; state law on water issues; and, the importance of organizing and working together at the community level on water issues.

Chairman English adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

APPROVED:

Ann English, Chairman

ATTEST:

Kim Lemons, Clerk of the Board