

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE COCHISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION HELD ON
THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2021**

A work session of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, July 15, 2021, at 10:30 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
Sharon Gilman, Associate County Administrator
Christine Roberts, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney
Kim Lemons, Clerk of the Board
Camila Rochin, Public Information Officer

Attendees: Darlene Melk, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, CCHC
Keith Buonocore, Finance Director
Daniel Duchon, Budget Manager
Alicia Thompson, Health & Social Services Director
Jackie Watkins, Director Eng & Natural Resources
Mark Apel, Environmental Project Coordinator
Kris Carlson, Civil Deputy County Attorney
Joe Casey, IT Chief Information Officer

Chairman English called the meeting to order at 10:30 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 county investment of the American Rescue Plan funds.

Ms. Gilman presented this item using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Gilman outlined the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding streams and how cities and towns within the County will receive. Cochise County received the first tranche of 12.2 million in May 2021. She listed the four restrictions on use, emphasizing they may not be used to meet unfunded liabilities. She stated the guidance for use is specific and a workgroup of Department Directors was formed to brainstorm and identify a guiding principle in alignment with the Board's Strategic Plan. The list of uses is not all-inclusive with a focus on responding to the Public Health Emergency and/or negative Economic Impacts and Water, Sewer and Broadband Infrastructure based on direction from the Board today.

She added the list can be added to as needed to address COVID related issues.

Ms. Gilman continued with the specifics of possible plan uses for the July/August timeframe to address the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency; September-December for Economic Impacts and Water, Sewer and Broadband Infrastructure; and Proposed Uses for future discussions. She outlined the reporting timeline and stated any unused funds would have to be returned by December 2026. After direction from the Board the next step would be to solicit community input through an online survey.

Mr. Karwaczka asked that the focus for today be for the first three years.

The Board commented on the proposed uses with a focus on expanding Public Health to help the public and businesses that have suffered during the health emergency with environmental health fees, inspections, and other costs. There was a discussion with staff about the logistics of implementing fee waivers: applications, fiduciary guidelines that need to be followed and process monitoring.

Supervisor Crosby included a handout as part of the discussion.

Chairman English introduced Dr. Melk who was present to discuss a partnership with the Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc. (CCHC) for expansion of Mental Health Services. Dr. Melk outlined the proposal to launch the program and requested funds for the next three years. The Board, Dr. Melk and staff discussed the details of the proposal and other avenues to explore in support of the partnership. The Board asked that Dr. Melk incorporate the discussion points and revise the current draft proposal.

The Board and staff discussed other ARP fund uses: Physical Plant Changes for Public Facilities that respond to the public health emergency and expansion of Ionizers; Public outreach via the PIO regarding state funding for housing assistance; and staff working with SEAGO – they are conducting a study to identify coverage gaps in order to expand broadband infrastructure.

Mr. Carlson explained EPA guidelines for use of funds to cover public not private wells. The Board and staff discussed using funds to hire an administrator in support of supplying clean water to communities in need – allowable under the interim guidelines.

Mr. Apel presented information on clean water and water conservation. He discussed the Bisbee Effluent Project and the Cochise Conservation & Recharge Network (CCRN) strategically placing recharge projects to enhance water and protect Fort Huachuca. He also asked for comments regarding a proposal sent to Chairman English for a pilot project that would use solar power to help supply clean water to low-income families.

Ms. Thompson asked the Board to consider Environmental Health Fee increases to cover the cost of doing business as part of the fee waivers discussed earlier.

Ms. Gilman said discussions will continue in future work sessions with plans to bring to the Board for a vote in August.

Chairman English adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m.

APPROVED:

Ann English, Chairman

ATTEST:

Kim Lemons, Clerk of the Board