

FINAL COPY
Torrance County Board of Commissioners
Regular Commission Meeting
March 26, 2025
9:00 AM

Commissioners Present:

RYAN SCHWEBACH-COUNTY CHAIRMAN
KEVIN MCCALL –COUNTY VICE-CHAIR
LINDA JARAMILLO – COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Others Present:

J. JORDAN BARELA – COUNTY MANAGER
MISTY WITT – DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER
MICHAEL GARCIA – COUNTY ATTORNEY
SYLVIA CHAVEZ – COUNTY CLERK
MACKENZIE CARLSON – ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT I
DON GOEN – COUNTY P & Z DIRECTOR

1. Call to order.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Calls the March 26, 2025, Regular Commission Meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Pledge led by: Ryan Schwebach– County Chairman

Invocation lead by: Kevin McCall – County Commissioner

3. Changes to the Agenda: None

4. PROCLAMATION: None

5. CERTIFICATES AND AWARDS: None

6. BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: None

7. PUBLIC COMMENT and COMMUNICATIONS:
(Comments limited to two minutes.)

Chad Hamilton- Resident: I want to say thank you to the County. They have diligently bladed out Shondale Lane. Hopefully we can get something to put on it, it's wash board out and the wind keeps blowing it out and just getting real bad. You know, Torrance County to say on the weather, it's when Hurricane Gail forces is what they're saying. So, we're trying to get that done. Also, we have done a lot of work on Mi Ranchito's. The end of Mi Ranchito's, about a mile. So, we're just trying to figure out the process of getting that road adopted by the county would be good. That's all I have to say. But thanks to Torrance County for dealing with me for 17 years.

Lauryn Pfrommer-Pease: Morning, Commissioners and Community members. My name is Lauren Pfrommer-Pease and I serve as the detention advocate with the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center. I'm here today to read a testimony of someone who was detained at TCDF. "My name is Roy New(unaudiable) and I've been here for five months at TCDF, Core Civic. They have treated me like a prisoner, not like a migrant. Because I have tattoos, they tell me that I am a gang member. I want to say that I should be treated justly. The food here is awful. The guards treat you as if you were less than them. ICE doesn't give me any answers at all. They don't say a word. I know nothing about what is going on. I need help because I've been here for five months. I just want my freedom, like we all do, the medical treatment is not acceptable. All they do is hand out ibuprofen without any actual care." This is the end of the testimony. I hope it helps to highlight the human rights abuse that are occurring. Just moments from where we are today, you all are in the extraordinary position where you have the opportunity to intervene in the system of harm. I urge you all to vote against the extension of the contract with ICE. Thank you.

Sophia Genovese: Morning, my name is Sophia Genovese. I am a managing Attorney at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center. Since the reopening of Torrance County Detention Facility in 2017 the Community has documented persistent human rights abuses, due process violations and unlivable conditions at the facility. We have consistently escalated these pervasive issues to the County ICE and Core Civic. Instead of rectifying these problems, Attorneys, Activists and people detained at TCDF have been retaliated against. These problems not only persist, they have worsened now. Most recently, TCDF is detaining Afghan allies who were critical in the fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan. These men who saved us and Afghan lives were left behind in the evacuation effort. Knowing well, that they'd be killed if they stayed in Afghanistan. These brave men fled to the United States, thinking they'd be welcomed. Instead, these men have been detained, and what's maddening is that their detention is not required under the law. Their detention is discretionary ICE refuses to release them, and they're being subjected to horrific conditions in the process. As the daughter of a veteran and as someone who lived on a military base during the US campaign in Afghanistan. I am disgusted with how these men and others are being treated at TCDF. Torrance County is complicit in the executives mass detention and deportation campaign. We are witnessing large scale operations that are ripping families and communities apart and jamming people through a deportation process with absolutely no due process. We call on Torrance County to say enough is enough. We call on this Commission to elect not to renew its immigration detention contract with ICE. Thank you.

Luke Fields-Grants Administrator: Good morning, my name is Luke fields. I'm the Grants Administrator for Torrance County. Mr. Chair, Mr. Commissioner, Madam Commissioner. I failed to get in for the departmental update. I'm here under a time limit to just give you a quick update on the Petco love grant that we put in for since we last met with the Commission. I did put in that application last week, but the reason why I'm up here in front of you is that in order to put in that application. I do expect that to be approved tomorrow. Have to come up with an event to use the vaccines. You have to put the cart in front of the horse before you get the horse. What I did is I went ahead and got permission to organize an event at the fairgrounds. It's gonna be a drive through vaccination clinic on May 3, Saturday, 10am to 2pm and what we're doing is expanding it into a Community event that we're calling tentatively, Torrance County cares. We're gonna have

Representatives from the County. I'm gonna do a pet photo booth. We might have a vendor, and Mr. Barela has agreed to be in a dunk tank, but I don't have a dunk tank. So, it's kind of an empty offer at this point. It's a little rude, if you ask me, but if I can find a dunk tank, maybe one of the dips for sheep or something, well make it work. But we're going to have a lot of fun with it. We're going to do a lot of good for the Community. This is for a completely free Distemper, Parvo combination shots for canines. We didn't think the drive through would be a good idea for the cats, so we're going to do another event in the future, but that's it for now. Thank you for your time and constituents, I thank you for your time as well.

Tiffany Wang: Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners and Community members. My name is Tiffany Wang with Innovation Law Lab. Today, the Commissioners are once again having the choice to vote for human rights and Community values or for exploitation of people both teen individuals, workers and County resources for the benefits of a private prison company. For the past couple of months, we've seen people from Massachusetts, Maine, Jersey and Florida ripped away from their Families and Communities and imprisoned at the Torrance County Detention facility. We also know that just this month, forty-eight Mexicans across the state were taken by ICE. We still don't know where they are, but it's very possible that some of them ended up TCDF. Suffering all the inhumane conditions that my colleagues and I have shared with you for more than a year, sewage flooding, a lack of food and water, inadequate medical care and much more. Let me be clear, a vote in favor of extending this contract is a vote to encourage the targeting detention and torture of more New Mexicans. Moving forward after the vote on whether to extend the County's contract between ICE and Core Civic, the next agenda item focuses on Economic Development for Torrance County. As I mentioned a month ago, I wish I could come to the County Commission meetings with the sole purpose of discussing Economic Opportunities, I really do want to see everyone in this Community thrive. I want to discuss how to create jobs that don't have unsafe and unsanitary conditions, that don't mandate excessive overtime, unlike what we heard from people who worked at the Torrance County detention facility in the whistle blower complaint. I want to help find solutions so that people don't have to wait hours for emergency medical services. I want to talk about life-giving projects for the County to invest in instead of life-taking ones. The County Commission has the opportunity today to vote both against Torrance County's complicit Communities and for taking steps to invest in other economic

opportunities. I urge you to vote no on the contract extension and Torrance County's contract with ICE and Core Civic. Thank you.

Saygen Ruvalcaba: Good morning. Chairman, Commissions and Community members. My name is Saygen Ruvalcaba. I'm with The New Mexico Dream Team. This is a comment from a person that's formally detained at Torrance County facility. "Greetings to you. My name is Julio Cesar. I am from the Dominican Republic. I direct this to anyone who may be interested. I am detained at Torrance prison, having to come to this Country to seek asylum. They have held me in this prison for more than three months without any response about anything. ICE officers arrive at the center. They talk to whoever they please. For the rest of us, when we address them, they speak badly to us. The response is that they have nothing to talk about. At the center, the Core Civic Officers treat us like animals. They put us to work in the kitchen. One takes this work to distract one's mind, because they lock us up every two hours like animals in the room. But when you go to the kitchen, the chefs want to exploit you with work. They tell us that we can't sit even for a minute, as if we were slaves. Their threat is that they will return us to a room and that they will make a report against us that would prolong our process. I'm tired, I'm a father of a family, and there are hundreds of people here like me. It is a inhumane abuse, psychological mystery. I have never set foot inside a prison, and I came to this Country to ask for asylum. They've put me in a prison. I want this to reach the right person. We are tired. This is an abuse of human beings. What they do to us immigrants. They separated me from my younger brother, they released him and left me in prison without any answers. I would like for this to prove the Deportation Officers abuse the use of their powers. Thank you very much and blessings to you.

Ariel Prado: Good morning, Commissioner. My name is Ariel Prado. I'm with Innovation Law Lab been here before. We've heard a lot of testimony and a lot of people within Core Civic. There's also been reports filed by people who work at the facility about the working conditions in the facility. I think we've heard some of the statements about standing with Core Civic. I'll say, I don't envy your position, hopeful that you'll make the vote today. That folks are asking you to make. I think to some extent, folks understand some of the factors that run into your decision making. I think my ask today, or my hope today, would just be that the weight of

the decision really does sit with the Community of the people in that jail. It sits with their families that they've been separated from, the Communities that they separate. Let that be in the room with you as you're making your decision. I think some of us don't have to go very far back in our family histories to know or to think of times when people in our families had to flee, to seek asylum and to find safety in other places. It's not that hard to find ourselves in the shoes of the people in that extensive side. I think that is my hope for today. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

***Comment by Zoom**

Ian Philabaum: Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners and community members. My name is Ian Philabaum, I'm with Innovation Law Lab. I will be playing a recording from somebody recently detained at the Torrance County detention facility.

***Spanish Audio played**

On behalf of this person and every person subjected to these conditions at the Torrance County Detention facility, we ask that you do not extend the contract. Thank you.

Victor Romero Hernandez: Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners and Community members. My name is Victor Romero Hernandez, and I'm with Innovation Law Lab. This is a translation of the recording you just heard from a person detained in TCDF. "We are fighting here for our rights as human beings, right in this immigrant community, we are fighting for our rights. We are in Torrance, pleading for ourselves for the right to medicine. They don't give us medicine. The food is very bad. They don't give us water. We recently went on strike to get them to provide us with all these services, instead of attending to us, they attacked us. Torrance gets a lot of money, that money isn't seen. The security here is bad. The assistance is very bad. So many people hear and see that because we are so called illegals. They have us here, right? But it doesn't have to be this way, because they must help us and try not to say, okay, you will be deported. They scare us into leaving this Country. It doesn't have to be this way. Really, we are in terrible condition's. One could be dying inside of ourselves, and they don't do anything to help us or for us to be well. So really, we're doing badly, and their

security is bad. How can they provide us with security? There is no security for us inside here. There are many things that are happening that are ugly. We need people out there to hear us.” That's the end of the translation. Thank you.

Faith Yoman: Good morning. My name is Faith Yoman. I have visited Torrance County Detention Center ICE detainees dozens of times in the past couple of years. I urge you not to extend the agreement with ICE to detain immigrants there. I will read the following statement of someone who was detained at Torrance County Detention Facility last year. who wrote this while detained. “My name is Jose. I came to the United States to seek asylum but was sent to Torrance instead of to my family in the US. I have been experiencing medical problems, and I've been diagnosed with thyroid cancer. In order to operate on me, the immigration agents wanted me to sign a power of attorney to perform the surgery within the next 90 days. Since there are doctors in my family, I wanted a second opinion. I needed my medical records. Which I requested without any success. I don't know why they won't give me my medical documents to give to my family. I just want to be able to have access to doctors, and I'm willing to pay for it. I don't trust the medical attention here at Torrance, there are many deficiencies I fear for my life.” That's the end of this statement. Thank you.

Barbara Schroeder: Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Barbara Schroeder. I'm a volunteer with the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center. I'd like to read the testimony of a man named Teo who was detained at TCDF until late last year. “The food here is practically cardboard or synthetic. For example, when you put the sausages in the oven, they smell of plastic or carcass, not meat. When there's leftover food in the kitchen, the official prefers to throw away the food instead of giving us more food. They do not feed us sufficiently. They prefer that we buy food in the commissary to profit from us. I buy soup to eat enough calories. I have no support from anyone. They pay me \$3 a day to work here, the detention center owes me one week's pay, and they haven't paid me. Several colleagues haven't been paid for weeks. When they don't pay me on time, I can't call my wife. I was separated from my wife and child at the border. I presented my marriage certificate, but they didn't let me see my wife and son. This is an injustice to be treated this way.” So, Commissioners, I urge you to vote to not extend the contract with ICE. Thank you.

Regina Dickens: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, for the opportunity to express my advocacy for migrant detainees. My name is Regina Dickens, and I volunteer with the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center. I sincerely trust that you, your family and friends would never tolerate the dehumanizing behavior that these migrants experience if you were in their Countries of origin, seeking safety and had been detained. Migrants with HIV and cancer are denied treatment and medication that are constitutionally required. Many of the young migrants, who are gender diverse, are subject to abuse, violence and humiliation for their sexual identity. Generalized hostility is directed to all the migrants or at all the migrants because of their Country of origin, social, political and religious affiliations, race, skin color, hair texture and language. The detention staffs degrading and humiliating behaviors are a reflection of the socio-political acceptance of hate towards migrants. Commissioners, stop making easy money off of detaining migrants. I respectfully challenge you to stand up to social and political pressure by signing these contracts with ICE. Thank you.

Jared Weatherholtz: My name is Jared Weatherholtz. I'm the Chief Program Officer at Catholic Charities We serve people of all beliefs and backgrounds throughout New Mexico. Catholic Charities urges the County not to extend the ICE detention contract at the Torrance County Detention Facility. Our agency believes in honoring human dignity for all people. We ask the Commission to consider the lack of human dignity at the detention facility, please consider rejecting the extension of this contract. Thank you.

Emily Alvarez: Hi, Good Morning. My name is Emily Alvarez. I'm the director of Immigration at The Immigration Center at Catholic Charities. The following is a statement from Kevin Alejandro Mina, who was detained in Torrance until late last year. He was separated from his wife at the border, and he suffered due process violations. He was ultimately deported at the end of last year. His statement, which was gathered from Torrance County Detention Facility last year, says "I'm from Ecuador. I'm fleeing my Country because my family and I have been receiving threats to kill us. I've been detained for more than six months at Torrance for trying to seek asylum. My wife and I were separated at the border. She was released, but the government kept me, I don't understand why. I miss my wife. I want to talk to her to make sure she was okay. I've lost all contact with my family. I do not have

any contact with my family in Ecuador or with my wife anymore. The government got rid of free phone minutes for immigrants, now I cannot call her. All I can do is hope for the best. Being here you learn to cope mentally. I was told that if I turned myself into the border, I would be let go and allowed to seek asylum. This was not true. Now I am here, detained, and I don't know why the treatment is horrible. I'm very sad, but I'm prepared for what the judge and God have for me, because hope is all I can cling to." On behalf of Kevin and everyone in Torrance County Detention Facility, we ask that you do not extend the contract. Thank you.

Tracey Master- Resident: Good morning, Commissioners. Tracey Master, Commission District Two. Sorry, different subject as a member of the Torrance County Emergency Resource Partners and a member of the LEPC. I just personally wanted to thank you for supporting both entities within the County. I'd like to take the opportunity to encourage anyone who is listening to please consider joining our meetings and participating with us. As you know, we're in 3355 square miles. We could have wildfires, we could have train derailments, we could have so many different things. We've had many of these already. The more people that we can get involved in our Community to assist, the better. Thank you much. When it comes to making any decisions regarding ICE, I ask that you make the decision that you think is best for our Community.

Bella Bjornstad: Good morning, Commissioners, Chairperson, my name is Bella Bjornstad. I'm an Immigrant Justice Corps Fellow at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center. In the last couple of years, I've spent several hours each month providing basic legal orientation to immigrants held in ICE custody at Torrance County Detention Facility. I've met with immigrants detained there throughout the year, during all seasons when the ICE side of the facility is full and when relatively few people are in ICE custody there. Regardless of external factors, conditions at the facility have remained unsafe. Over the course of many visits, in person and phone calls with clients there. People detained at Torrance have encountered scary conditions. Medical Care at Torrance appears almost nonexistent, and as far as I can tell, people have told me they've received, or they've requested medical attention for acute and chronic illnesses. Someone earlier mentioned HIV and cancer, and I've heard similar reports. These people have told me they've received only sporadic care, if any. Without regular treatment, those conditions are deadly.

People with serious neurological symptoms are given ibuprofen. People with seizure disorders, in many instances, have received no care at all. Those detained at Torrance express fear that if something urgent happens, if there's some kind of an accident, that they could die or suffer irreparable harm because of the lack of medical attention. Then recently, as the facility has filled up with people in detention, with detained immigrants, those held at the facility have had less and less access to staff, as I've heard from people detained there. In some cases, they see staff only during mealtimes. Pods that should be monitored throughout the day are only checked on by a guard occasionally. That means that there may not be supervision when urgent issues arise during count. Men have told me they're forgotten in their cells for an hour and a half or two hours after count has finished, because of the staffing shortage.

Joel Hernandez: Good morning, Commissioners and Chairperson. I'm a volunteer with Vita. My name is Joel Hernandez, I just wanted to speak up against the Torrance County Detention Facility. I grew up with two immigrant parents here in New Mexico. One of my greatest fears was witnessing them being detained. The conditions that I saw are deplorable, and these people are treated like criminals. In their faces. I've seen my parents. I've seen my family members, and so I urge you to deny the extension of the contract. Thank you.

Patrick Reinhart: Hi all. My name is Patrick Reinhart, I want to speak on behalf of the immigrants that are being held at Core Civic TCDF. I believe that we should be thinking about their hopes and their prayers. How every night that many of these folks that I've been hearing through these different testimonies. I think that this rest's on Peoples shoulders of this Commission. I think that you know you all have the power to rectify yourselves of this injustice that's been happening in Torrance County for some years now. I think that there's a chance for us to write some wrongs. We're in a dire time and a necessary time for us to act. Please, deny any ICE contracts. Thank you.

Artemis Tercero: Good morning, Chairman, Commissioners and Community members. I'm Artemis, I'm with the New Mexico Dream Team. I have a comment from a person who was formally detained at the Torrance County Detention

Facility. My name is Leadis Isea. I'm here imprisoned because it's not detained. It's imprisoned here in Torrance County. where, unfortunately, working in the kitchen to be able to support myself here and talk to my family, I was burned. I had second- and third-degree burns, for which there was no adequate medical care here for that and many other illnesses. Here, they don't even have the staff to do first aid for a burn of the level that I had. I had to wait three and a half hours, almost four hours, for an ambulance to arrive so they could take me outside. We want help from people out there. We are people. We are human beings who deserve opportunities. We did not come here to be detained for so long without argument. We are here in the hand at the mercy of God, please, truly, we need help from people outside the closure of this place. This is not a detention center. This is a prison. This is a maximum-security prison. Where, unfortunately, they have us here so that they can make money. The longer we spend here, the more money they make. Enough. Really, we are human beings. We need the opportunity. We need attention from many people out there who can help us. We're human beings, please. We're not prisoners, we're not animals, we're human beings. I urge you to not extend the contract with ICE.

8. DEPARTMENT UPDATES AND COMMUNICATIONS:

A. ROADS: In-House Training Duties

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Morning Commission, County Manager, Leonard Road department. I'm trying to work on some stuff, for the department, where everybody can keep building up. We've always done this every year. We've tried to change a lot of stuff and I have a position that I haven't filled since it's been vacant. He was a road foreman, he's not with us. It's been open, and I'm really feeling that I don't need two road foremen's, because I have another one out there that does a lot. I would like to split this position into a truck Foreman and into a Safety Training person in my department. It creates a couple more positions for our guys to work up to, get up into the Road Superintendent. It's in my budget. It's just going to be that I'll have one person that'll do all our training for us, make sure our safety is right, when we get new hires. I'm all about change, and I'm like new change. But the trainings we got to do now is been sent to us on our phones. We have to do everything by email. I just can't have them parked on side of the road and sit on the phone and try and do a training. We created a space to do this,

and I would like to have one person that would make sure that all of us get the training that needs to be done and knowing that everybody's in one spot doing the training together, it's better, in my eyes. Then just letting them do it whenever they want to do it. I just feel this needs to be something that we should do in my department. I mean, that's kind of where I'm at. This is for our safety training. It's for safety and for everything under our signage, everything that has to do with safety in our department, because we have a bunch of younger generation of personnel. They're learning steps, but anything that needs to be entertaining part, it would be nice to have one person that I could send off that we need to learn to learn it come back and then train all of us on it. Our safety officer for the County will send us out, but make sure that we all sit down, and we all do the training together. If there's any questions to be done or they want another answer, we have somebody that can answer that, not just listen to it and say, "Oh yeah, I took the test."

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: So currently, right now, everybody just does it via zoom whenever. But in all these trainees, there's in house.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Yeah, I'd like to have it in house for my guys also, it used to be that we all came to a training. We went somewhere. So now you get an email, and it gets sent to everybody, and your test.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: You're telling me training is subpar at the moment?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: I feel that it is.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: I don't have a problem with that.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: What was the split? Again, a training officer, and what else?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: A truck foreman. So I need a truck Foreman because, when we're hauling gravel, I need one guy that I can tell this is what we're doing on this project, and he will return all the paperwork back to me, all the roads that were hauled. Now I have all of them doing it, I kind of need one guy that can do that.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: These two duties are one person?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It'll be two different people. One is my truck foreman, and then one will be a safety officer that works in other parts, but he can do our trainings and our safety and everything. Make sure everybody has their vest, our hats, all the stuff has to be done out there. Make sure signage is up.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: Are these additional employees?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: They're employees that currently work in the department.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: Current and employees that you're putting a second out on?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It's going to be an increase to their pay because they're going to take more duties on. But I'm trying to get this kind of figured out before we do this rolling in the budget cycle. I would like to get this done too. It's already in my budget. That way it's already all set, ready to go.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I think in person training is good. I think it's good hands on. Yes, I agree.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: Do you have kind of a budgeted amount on what it takes for this individual to go off to these trainings throughout the year.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Well, it's a free training.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: So just, you gotta travel overnight?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Yeah, I haven't really sat and figured all that. I'm trying to get this all done. It's just been in my head, trying to make the department that much better. It gives everybody a way to work up. I mean, now there's just two spots at the top. That's all it is.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: So now you just have two more slots?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: I have another spot I'm just going to split that one in half, and it'll be two more. It'll be four spots. You can get to a Road Foreman, a Truck Foreman. You can go to safety, and then you can go up to your road foreman, and then a superintendent.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: You're talking a pretty large restructure of the current positions, kind of sort of.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: No, because the ones that I have in mind already, just need the title. The training part, I just really been trying to push it a little bit more. Like I said, I'm all about change. I know it's technology, but you don't want to learn so much sitting in front of the screen.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: I'm not arguing with anything you're saying. What I'd like to see is it go through the budget cycle, implement it at that point. I mean, that's just kind of what we've done in the past, and it makes more sense, and we can work out more details the more you think of it. But within that budget, you know, kind of an idea how many trainings there will be. So, we have a handle on travel. I think we may want to look a little different, evaluate your employee policy and what's expected of them, that sort of thing, make sure it coincides with it. Those are my thoughts. Are you guys opposed to any of this?

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I mean, I'd like to see it during the budget cycle as well. Would you be opposed to just hiring a brand-new person and splitting those duties between one. My fear is you're taking your same company, if you will, and spreading more duties upon them, giving them more money, I agree, if they're taking on new duties, but what about adding a whole new position with that money that is vacant?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: We're barely filling positions now as it is, and I want to use funding that's already in our budget and not create a whole other position. That's what I'm trying to do. I'm just trying to give steppingstones for future in the department that they have ways to go up. You hire one that's going to just take over, that defeats the purpose, the person takes time to create a better place for them to have a chance to move up. I have guys that can do the position because, like I said, I have some spots already, but I just really like to put one, like in my trucking part I need to put because my other road foreman that's what he was, he was in the truck, and he did all the paperwork on those projects and brought them to me. But since he left, we've never filled that position.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Because you can't find anybody?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: We've been shorthanded as it is, and then we really hadn't any one of the ones over there really came up and said,

you know, I'd like to see if I could take that position. But I just, I feel that Now's the chance to use that money to split it between two, because I gotta have somebody that's going to train when I get new hires. I don't have to pull somebody off a truck to go train that he can just go, train a blade operator, train a backhoe operator.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: So, you, trainer will be on a piece of equipment, while your truck management will be on the truck.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Your trainer will never be on a piece of equipment?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: The trainer will be on every piece of equipment, because he's going to train on everything.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Then he'll be in the field when he's on duty.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: He's also an operator? I think we need to run it through the budget, work out the details within the budget cycle. It'll work for you.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: I just feel that it needs to be a good thing. I just gotta work on it. Just the training part really, I don't like my guys sitting on a phone.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: I don't blame you. Does that mean that we won't see them sitting on the side of the road? That makes sense. I didn't realize that's how you guys were getting your training. I was not aware of that so that makes sense to me for sure. Let's just work it up in the budget cycle, see what it looks like, and we'll go from there.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Kind of an update. I met with Bohannon Houston yesterday. We're putting a project or TPF to try to work on Lexico. We're going to try and see if we can ask for some funds for it and try to get the road redone, literally completely widened, repave it. It's going to take a process. I mean, really expensive, but we're just going to keep asking for money and see if we can get it.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: You're talking the length of Lexico.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Totally to Lexico, 7.5 miles.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: What are you talking about doing on widening?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: What we talked about yesterday was for us to regrind everything there, bring in another six inches of base course, and then put another four inch over the top. Widen it to 30 feet, stripe it at 20 and have four-foot shoulders on the sides or two foot Ssolutions.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Remind me where you got the funding the first time it was paid.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It was through the state, It was a big project that came out. They added money to a bunch of counties to spend. I can't remember exactly the name of it right now, because we've switched so many other projects. We only paved six miles at that time, because the first mile and a half was already paved, way before my time. We're asking for the full amount. I'm going to go visit with Moriarty. The first mile of that road is the city of Moriarty's, because they annexed it past Lexico to the west when they brought in the solar. And when they were trying to bring in Walmart. It was already annexed that piece.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: That's the reason that fire station sits there.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Yes. So I'm going to go with Moriarty and see if they'll apply with us.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: What are you applying for?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: TPF funds. That way you guys know that is in the prosses.

Ryan Schwebach- County Chairman: Alrighty. Thank you.

B. ASSESSOR: Notice of Value Update

Linda Gallegos-Chief Deputy Assessor: Morning, Mr. Chairman, Commissioner McCall, Commissioner Jaramillo, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Linda

Gallegos, and I'm the Chief Deputy Assessor. I'm before you today to speak on the notices of value Assessor Lucero, at the last meeting, gave an in-depth report on the House bill for Veterans exemptions because of the timeliness of the signing of that house bill, which wasn't until Thursday of last week. We did, weeks ago, file for a potential extension to send out our notices of value, we found that we are going to have to use that extension. So, instead of our statutory obligation to send out notices of value assessments covering residential, non-residential, livestock, BPP on April 1st, they will now go out on May 1st. So, it pushes the whole cycle back 30 days. The last day to file for exemptions or dispute your value or file for any tax benefits through the Assessor's Office will be June 2nd, because June first is a Sunday. We're also waiting a little bit. There was a House Bill number 494, that was filed in conjunction to clean up language on that disabled veteran portion of House Bill 47 that is still currently sitting on the Governor's desk for signage. It got to her desk yesterday. So, unless you need me to give a little history for information on House Bill 47 on the veterans exemptions, that's what I have to report for now. Any questions

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Are these two separate bills, the exemption and the allowance.

Linda Gallegos-Chief Deputy Assessor: House Bill 47 has two, two bills in one, the one for regular Veterans, which increases the exemption amount from \$4,000 to \$10,000. Then also the Disabled Veteran portion that now allows for any percentage Disabled Veteran to claim exemption on their property, not just the 100% disabled. The cleanup language in 494 gives our office statutory time for that exemption to be made in the past, those exemptions could be claimed anytime during the year. House Bill 494 will permit it to be claimed only during the usual month of April, thirty days after the mailing of the notices of value. Which helps our office create a uniform deadline, and then we can also track revenue losses, and it helps us with our budgets and so on. So that is an important piece of legislation, as well as it affects our offices,

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: What's your idea of getting this word out to the public?

Linda Gallegos-Chief Deputy Assessor: On April 3rd, we have an outreach at Tri County from 12pm to 4pm, kind of a meet and greet and so on. I'm also going to contact East Mountain radio, which is 102.1 they do their Community broadcasting. I also have a contact with the Independent. Then also do a radio broadcast out of Albuquerque on that same 102.1. We've also put it on our

Facebook page, social media. Other than that, if anyone has any other ways for us to get that information out there, besides our regular outreach that we do in Encino, Willard and Mountainair. Word of mouth is the public media that we have to use.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Did you put it on your notice of value? Something on your notice of value? To tell people about this or is it not allowed?

Linda Gallegos-Chief Deputy Assessor: Notice of value will already have the \$10,000 exemption. If we change our notices of value at this time, it's going to cost us extra. It's going to cost 1,000s of dollars extra that we're not budgeted for.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: But is it possible to do that in the future?

Linda Gallegos-Chief Deputy Assessor: That maybe what we can do is for next year's notices, put the information on there regarding the disabled veteran information. The \$4,000 to \$10,000 takes effect this year in 2025. The disabled won't take effect until 2026 simply because of the complexity of changing our software systems to allow for that percentage variability that's going to be on our accounts, from account to account.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: You can't do it this year, you can in the future?

Linda Gallegos-Chief Deputy Assessor: Yes, and in the interim, we can do more PR for 2026 between now and next year. If you have any questions, please feel free to call our office, because we will get questions that we received our notices of value. One more thing I just like to urge, please look at your notices of value. The information that is on those accounts reflect what your tax bill will be in October or November.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. COMMISSION: Request approval of minutes of March 12, 2025, regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve minutes.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach
– County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Abstained:

MOTION CARRIED

B. COMMISSION: Requesting Ratification of the February 26,2025
Regular Meeting Minutes of the Board of County Commissioners to
Include Commissioner Kevin McCall’s Approval.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve Ratification of minutes.

Kevin McCall -County Vice Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach
– County Chairman: – Abstained: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

10. CONSENT AGENDA

A. FINANCE & PURCHASING: Request approval of payables.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve payables.

Kevin McCall -County Vice Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach
– County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

11. ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE/AMENDMENT TO COUNTY CODE:

None

12. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION:

A. FIRE: Request Approval of Resolution No. 2025-14, A Resolution Declaring a Fire Danger Emergency Within the Unincorporated Portions of Torrance County and Imposing Burning Restrictions.

J. Jordan Barela: Thank you, Mr. Chair, Commission. This resolution was put together in accordance with ordinance 87-2, which is the ordinance the County has specific to regulating and proper handling of fire and open burning. With the drought conditions and moving into the windy season, obviously, across the state of New Mexico. There's been some issues as far as some relatively small fires that have gotten out of control. Specifically in Torrance County, last week, we had five fires on days when we had gusts of 50 to 70 miles an hour. Fortunately, enough of those were controlled. But pursuant to resolution 87-2, section five, be the County Commission, based on recommendations from the County Manager, can declare a period of ongoing critical fire weather that pose a significant and continued risk of uncontrolled fire, and declare an emergency to prohibit, all open fires within Torrance County. This resolution would prohibit that. It would make violation of that a misdemeanor offense. But permitted burns, barbecuing, those things, there's certain provisions in the ordinance itself that would still be allowable.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Permitted burns, like Forest Service, those kinds of things?

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: How do Fireworks fit into this?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Well, Mr. Chair, for fireworks we would likely do a separate resolution specific to fireworks. Now, this resolution does not have an end date on it specifically because we don't necessarily know when the windy season is going to stop, so it would be in place until it gets repealed. The language specific in the ordinance does not refer specifically to fireworks. But that is something, if we do not get moisture, moving into July, we may look at that independently.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: We need to have a 30 day prior to, I mean, when we ran into that. Just keep it on your radar.

Sylvia Chavez- County Clerk: Commission, Chair, the resolution number should be 2025-14.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-14

Linda Jaramillo -County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

B. ROADS: Request Approval of Resolution No. 2025-15, A Resolution Requesting Financial Assistance Provided by the New Mexico Department of Transportation to Purchase Highway Equipment in Accordance with the New Mexico Legislature Housing Bill SHTD Emergency Rule 93.5, Amendment 1, and the Annual Hardship Program 18 NMAC27.4.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: This is a hardship that we apply for every year for the 25,000 to try and get old machinery from state highway. We just submit this, and then they'll let us know if we qualify or not.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-15.

Kevin McCall-County Vice Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

13. APPROVAL/ACTION ITEMS

A. MANAGER: Request Approval of a Modification to the Intergovernmental Agreement Between Torrance County and the United States Department Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Extending the Agreement for a Seven-Month Period, beginning on April 1, 2025, and ending on October 31, 2025.

Lind Jaramillo- County Commissioner: So, I've been listening to these accounts of mistreatment at the prison, and I know Commissioner Schropp has been visiting the prison before he left. Is it okay if I visit the prison, and can I visit with these detainees? Or is that against policy?

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: As a matter of fact, a Commissioner is one of the few individuals that can visit that prison at any given time unannounced.

Lind Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I'm going to vote for this today. I'm going to do it, but I'd like to have more interaction with these detainees, because we have a contract with ICE, right? We're the Commission. I'm the Commissioner, so I'd like to visit more often, as much as I possibly can. To visit with the detainees, because you hear all of these, and you don't know what's true and what's not true and what's exaggeration. I'd like to make a point of visiting the detainees a little more over the period of this contract. That I can see for myself what's going on in there with these detainees. I know this is a federal issue. It's the Federal Government that's processing these detainees. We just happen to be housing them because we have a place for them. But I don't think any human should be treated inhumanely, but I don't know that. I don't know that personally, so I'd like to visit more if it's okay with the Commissioners.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: It is. It is not just okay. It is encouraged. That is one of the tasks of the Commission. I visited the place multiple times. I would actually do unannounced visits. You are one of three people that can, as long as this contract is in place. I think that the public needs to be aware of is that I have been there many times too, and that has been driving my votes on. You need to see it with your own eyes. When you talk to our manager, you may end up there at two o'clock in the morning, if you want to. I would encourage it.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I don't want to go with a group. I want to go on my own. I just want to go myself in there and talk to these people. Okay, that's all I have to say.

Action Taken:

Kevin McCall-County Vice Chair: Motion to approve.

Kevin McCall-County Vice Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

B. MANAGER: Request Approval of a Plan to Address Economic Development Activities within Torrance County by: (1) Authorizing Approval of to Submit an Application to Economic Development Administration for the Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant to Execute a

Comprehensive Economic Development Plan for Torrance County and for the Salary and Benefits for an Economic Development Specialist to Oversee the Execution and Implementation of the Plan; (2) to Reclassify the Vacant Grants Assistant Position for the Purpose of Supporting the Salary and Benefits of an Economic Development Specialist; and (3) to Reallocate \$25,000.00 in the FY25 Budget Earmarked for the Estancia Valley Economic Development Association to the Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance and to Support the Salary and Benefits of an Economic Development Specialist.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that was a very long reading, and I'll try to put some context to that there. There would still be some approvals along the way in terms of approving the job description, approving grant agreements, those types of things. But I did want to lay out for the board a general plan for evaluating economic development. We've had some discussions about what role the County plays in that process now that EVEDA has dissolved and is moving into this year. Some of the discussions that both the Deputy Manager and I have had with economic development folks. We met with the EDA, and they have made us aware of a grant opportunity, which is an EA grant that would allow the County to submit for three years of grant funding for a number of different things. Our idea was to submit a funding request for a Comprehensive Economic Development plan. There was one done for the southern portion of the County. Not one that was comprehensive and would meet the current leader requirements, and that's over five years old.

That plan, in and of itself, would sort of set the framework for redoing a ordinance. Also, establishing economic development programs within the County, but all that has to happen with a staff person on board to really execute those functions. This particular grant would cover that staff person as well, at least for the three-year period. That was one of the items. However, how does that position get funded? Even the grant agreement itself requires a 20% match, and we recently had a vacancy within the Manager's office with the Grants Assistant position. That position would free up roughly \$49,000 a year in funding that can be repurposed for our portion of this match, but subsequent to that, it could be used to help support the salary of an Economic Development Specialist moving forward, even once this EA grant term ends, if we receive that award. The other area where there's already money in the FY 25 budget for economic development is the \$25,000 that's been appropriated for EVEDA obviously, they've dissolved. That money is there but will not be used for that purpose.

Our idea, based on the previous presentation by the area, was to allocate roughly \$5,600 of that to get that membership to the area, approve that agreement, and get access to those resources. Then, reappropriate the remaining \$19,000 to further cover the salary and benefits. In the packet material, I did provide a couple of items just for the Board's reference. One of them was a salary comp study that we did for Ed specialists or managers in the area. But it does give you sort of a breakdown on the reclassification and the financing, the first page would have your current positions so the Grants Assistant reallocating that would appropriate roughly \$49,500 and of course, the \$25,000 with the EVEDA, if we take out the \$5,643 for the annual area contract. That would leave us roughly \$68,784 to appropriate for the match that takes us over the 20% threshold. We are having some discussions about how we can maybe maximize this first grant term.

But I think with that appropriation, that would be enough to support this position even after the grant sort of expires. The second page for the EAA ground budget this is by no means final, but we did kind of want to give, an idea of what we were looking at as far as plans. Year one would be, obviously, the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan and the salaries and benefits of the specialist. Year two would include some consulting services as well as salary and benefits for the specialist. Year three is really where you get into your programs. You know, what is that plan going to spin into, and how does the County sort of effectuate those it's difficult to know exactly what those programs are until the plan actually gets completed. But we are having discussions with the EA to see if we can just put in, a blanket line into the grant, knowing that economic development programs or projects will be developed as a result of this and whether or not that grant can be appropriate. Kind of a long-winded response, but I did want to provide some context to this request.

Kevin McCall-County Vice-Chair: Tell me again, what was year two?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Year two was evaluating and getting some consulting work to re-evaluate our data ordinance.

Linda Jaramillo-County Commissioner: This person would be working with the grants department as well?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: They would be working under the Manager's Office. But one of the reasons that we felt comfortable in terms of saying we could reappropriate the Grants Assistant position in the intent of the job description. Which was also provided to oversee the capital outlay process for the

County, because that's a Grants function right now. Though it's not necessarily written into the Grants Administrator's job description as it's being executed. But those types of projects, whether we're talking about the fairgrounds multi-purpose building or we're talking about infrastructure projects. Those do have an overlap with Economic Development, having the appropriate infrastructure in place for site readiness, and things along those lines. But also, now with the fairgrounds as an example, having that multi-purpose building. What additional Community events, resources, training, things along those lines workforce development could be appropriated in a facility like that. So, the intent would be to have them encompass that.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: We do need Economic Development in the County.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Well, this is kind of a big shift, which I totally agree with. What you're asking today, explain to me, what you're asking for us to approve is application of this grant to move forward with this plan, which is still somewhat fluid.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: It's still somewhat fluid, Mr. Chair. So, what we're asking for is sort of an approval in the plan in general, kind of what I laid out here. If the board has some direction that you are on board with that plan. The grant agreement or the grant application, we're still going to have to bring that forward. The actual job description for the specialist we will bring that forward separately. These will be separate approvals, but they're all interconnected in terms of how they're envisioned to work out. The hope was to get an approval on the general concept of this moving forward, knowing full and well that there will be additional contracts and approvals along the way to get us to the finish line of completing this.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Is this what you were in Santa Fe? You were the Economic Development person in Santa Fe?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Not directly. I worked housing primarily, but with Economic Development, it was part of Community Development. But a very similar process in terms of how.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: There's a lot there to unpack and I appreciate your work. I think you've thought through it very well, and it makes sense. Even

after year three, and after the grant is expired, I think you've got a great pathway forward for this County to move forward. What is the grant total?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Just under \$500,492

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Is that the max we can ask for?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: No, depending on the size of the County. So, in talking to the EDA, it's all relevant to population. So, I have not heard of a hard cap on the grant amount that we could ask for. But it does have to be a reasonable and appropriate ask within something that we can access.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Match work is that just a percentage?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: 20% would be the requirement. Now, generally the requirements 50%. Torrance County, due to our income demographics and being a rural area, we qualify for the 20% match on this. Now we could put a 20% match on this. My only thought process was in terms of allocating this, which breaks out to about a 42% match right now. If the grant doesn't come through, we still have enough money to support a position. Or after the grant expires, that money has already been allocated and can support that position moving forward. The EDA has looked at our initial scope of work. They like it. They think it ready to be submitted, but they do want something to say, how is this going to be supported after the grant terms end? Because they are hesitant to fund something. If there's no game plan to continue funding after the term expires.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I'm in favor. Like I said, I think you've done a great job moving us forward. I guess I'd like to be a little more ambitious and over ambitious, and try to get maybe year one and two together, or move year one and two to year one and by year two, try to push your year three. I would like to see Economic Development be pushed forward a little harder than waiting for that year three. That's just a comment. I know there's a lot of discussion and approvals that will come along the way, but my hesitation, and probably problem of this plan is it's a little slow.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Mr. Chair, Commissioner I certainly get that perspective, too, and we can make that push. I would just say it was put year one and year two, because those two processes usually happen in sequential order, right? Your plan really dictates your ordinance, and so that process has to come in place first. I've seen it take anywhere from six months to, I think Santa Fe County

just updated theirs. It took them, like, 18 months, and there was some staff turnover and things along that line. I do get the need to make the push, and we will certainly do that. This was a layout for the EDA. I think where it breaks out as far as timelines is really relative to our ability to execute this.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: So, we are held to those three years?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Yeah, the grant term would be three years, and so anything that we're claiming as an expense in the grant application would have to be done within that three-year period.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: We can do it in two years? That's okay, also?

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: But the funding still continues on into year three?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Yeah, the terms 36 months.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I just feel like I'd want to get aggressive.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve.

Linda Jaramillo-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

C. MANAGER/ROADS: Request Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding Between Torrance County and City of Moriarty Related to Provision of County Labor and Equipment to Chip/Seal Streets Within Moriarty City Limits.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and this is a roads issue specifically, but I did work on the MOU with the City of Moriarty specifically regarding this. We had a very similar MOU in place that recently expired, that was there for a five-year term. But essentially, what this MOU will allow is County labor and County equipment to be used on City of Moriarty chip seal projects. We would agree to provide, the labor as well as the equipment the

City would be responsible for the procuring of materials, paying the PO for those materials, reimbursing the County for labor costs at one and a half time the normal rate of pay. The City also agrees to pay the County for use of equipment and reimburses for the cost of fuel, and also to handle any logistics, such as shutting down roads or things like that along these lines. Leonard's also here, this general process has been in place under an existing MOU, and my understanding is it has been working. When staff is available, they are getting paid overtime to do this. The City of Moriarty, because it expired, feel there's a need to continue this MOU moving forward.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I have a question, do they do this on their own time, that they're not working for the County. Like on weekends, it doesn't take away from fixing the roads within the County.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Jaramillo, I don't believe so, but I'll let Leonard speak to the specifics of how some of these have been executed.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Yes, it's just a MOU for us to be able to work for the City of Moriarty. We do these projects on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, if we have to, it's never during County time. It's to help them get their funding that they receive. Help them seal that. If they're not doing a payment project, something they want to do a chip show project or a gravel project, they will ask us to go. We'll do the figures on it and see what it's going to cost. They pay for all materials, everything we haul it in. They reimburse everything we do back to us. They pay the guys time and a half for them to be out there working on their time off.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I'm sure you have plenty of guys that are willing to do this for overtime?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Definitely get a little tight sometimes, but we still get it done. We're willing to help where we can. We do it for the City of Moriarty, we do it for Willard. We do it for Estancia. This one just expired, so they wanted to renew it.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I've had a discussion with the Mayor of Moriarty, and like you said, they've got funding ready to go that they're about to lose. So, we can help them out and you've got the people, by all means.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Mr. Chair, I'll just also mention this has gone to Moriarty City Council, and they have approved in its current form.

Action Taken:

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Motion to approve.

Linda Jaramillo-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

- D. FIRE:** Request Approval of an Unauthorized Purchase in the Amount of \$195.74 on to The Lil Battery Shop for the Purchase of a Continental 65CP with Core Exchange.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Mr. Chair, this will be my last one for a while. My understanding of the situation really a purchase that occurred with one of the Northern Fire Districts. They were trying to work with the new vendor, which is Little Battery Shop. They did get that vendor form submitted. They got it to our Administrative Assistant, Myra, for processing, and then a call came from the Chief a little bit later down the line to say, were we good with the vendor? Myra indicated Yes, as in, we're good with getting them registered not, as if we're good with the PO. And he took that as we're good with the PO and purchased the batteries. Yeah, that's the background here

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve.

Kevin McCall-County Vice-Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

- E. DWI:** Request Approval of a Professional Service Agreement Between Torrance County DWI Program and Perpetual Tears Memorial, Inc.

Myra Luna- DWI Program Coordinator: Morning I am Myra Luna, the Torrance County DWI program coordinator, Mr. Chair, Commissioner McCall Commissioner Jaramillo, we have two requests. The first one requesting approval for the professional service agreement between the Torrance County DWI program and Perpetual Tears Memorial, Inc. The money is in our grant, and they are for

conducting DWI prevention activities in the Community and Schools. I stand for questions.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Thank you for what you do,

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve

Linda Jaramillo -County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

F. DWI: Request Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding Between Torrance County DWI Program and Estancia Municipal School District for the Teens Need Teens Program in the Amount of \$2,500.00.

Myra Luna- DWI Program Coordinator: Mr. Chair, Commissioner McCall and Commissioner Jaramillo. The money are for our grant as well, and they are also for conducting DWI prevention activities in the Schools.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve

Kevin McCall-County Vice Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

G. ANIMAL SERVICES: Request Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding Between Torrance County Animal Services and the Village of Willard, NM for Temporary Emergency Animal Capture and Transportation.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: Morning everyone Danette Langdon Torrance County Animal Services. What we have first is a memorandum of understanding between Torrance County and Willard. This is just the first draft Willard needs assistance with their animal problem. They have got so many stray dogs attacking people, packing up and attacking other animals, killing hogs,

attacking cows, chasing children. We've already started taking some of the animals out of Willard because of the nature of the situation. But to continue helping Willard. We need an MOU. Since they do not currently have animal control, this is an MOU to facilitate emergency shelter for stray and unclaimed dogs picked up within the Village. If there is an emergency with animals in the Village, they would call dispatch, I think dispatch would probably be the way to go, so it's documented. We would go out and try to attend to the situation. We would pick the animals up, if we could. Take them to the shelter, hold them to the appropriate holding time, and then we would be able to do whatever we needed to at the end of that. Willard would be paying for the services.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I had gotten some calls on this myself from Willard and passed it on to Danette.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: We were out there doing a build with NM dog of some containment for some dogs. They build dogs kennels to get them off chains. We were out there to kind of have a presence out there and be seen. We had numerous people come up to us about this pack of dogs. There's always been a pack of dogs at the Cantina. Apparently, they're all getting very aggressive. Now, when we were there, somebody came to us and told us about this pack that had attacked their cat and tried to rip its face off. We were very concerned about that, of course, and this was the same pack of dogs that had killed a hog. I don't know if it was earlier in the month or earlier in the week, and they also chased a nine-year-old girl. We just decided to be proactive, because it was getting very dangerous. We picked those dogs up. We picked up a litter of puppies, we got the sign over from the owner, because there was an owner on this pack of dogs. We got her to sign them over, and we brought them to the shelter, so it would kind of start to alleviate the problem. But like I said, we do need to have something in place. This is a temporary MOU it would be for six months.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: I'm not finding the termination date.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: On the one I have it will expire six months after the execution. It gives them the opportunity to get some kind of shelter, appropriate shelter for animals. We are also looking to do a type of training in Willard. Myself, my Animal Control Officer and Moriarty Animal Control Officer, would like to go out there to do training to teach the Public. The Public Works gentlemen that would be handling the animal control issues out there, teach them about handling, housing, cleaning, caring for animals. We would like to kind of reach out to the public as well to come so they can learn about things like caring

for animals and whatnot, and proper tethering, because there was a lot of improper tethering out in Willard. All around the County, actually. So this is an opportunity for us to educate people so we can start to kind of alleviate some of these problems. The order for each day per animal would be \$15 the required holding period the animal has no identification would be 72 business hours by the state's definition. We at Torrance County Animal Services hold them a little while longer, but we would go by the state's definition on this one. It would minimize the time we were having to pay for them to be in the shelter. Once they are through their holding period, they would immediately become property of Torrance County Animal Services. And euthanize, or send to a rescue, pursuant to our operating procedures. We will bill Willard monthly for this, like I said, it will be \$60 per call that is documented through dispatch, and then \$15 per day. Per animal, and that would be documented in our shelter software.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Thank you for your attention toward this matter.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: We've been wanting to do this for years. So finally, we have the opportunity to do this.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: This is more of a comment. I didn't know we needed an MOU to go into our own County, but okay, and that's fine. But then, if you want to do this, and if the Village isn't willing, why don't we make that MOU for a longer period, even annually.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: The reason that we can't do that is every incorporated entity is required to provide their own animal control. Willard is incorporated, they do have to provide their own animal control and their own shelter to hold the animals. So that is why we've not been able to go in, which is also why we can't go into a Estancia, Moriarty or Mountainair. So, we are doing this for public health today, to get them to a place where they can do it themselves.

Action Taken:

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Motion to approve

Linda Jaramillo-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Absent: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

Chairman Schwebach stepped out during motion and roll call

H. ANIMAL SERVICES: Requesting Approval for Out-Of-State Training to the Animal Care Expo 2025 in Las Vegas, NV for Danette Langdon and Tanisha Starr. Request Reimbursement of Actual Travel Expenses In Lieu of PerDiem.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: Yes, the animal care Expo is put on every year by the Humane Society of the United States. We have an opportunity to go. I got a scholarship from the Humane Society, which covers my flight, hotel and conference registration. I asked Tanisha if she would like to attend. She's one of my senior staff, and she said she would like to attend. We have the purchase order in place for the flight and the conference registration. She will be staying with me. I've already spoken with the Humane Society, and she can. So, we are looking to do actuals upon return, because pretty much all we'll be paying for would be some meals and then transportation to the hotel from the airport, and then back when we are coming back.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Because of your scholarship.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: Everything from mine is paid for, except for, like, the travel from the Uber, whatever you'd like to use.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Have you ever done this before?

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: Yeah, it's been about nine years since I've gone to anything like this, I don't know, we used to go pretty regularly, Cindy and I did, but we just haven't in the past nine years. I thought, well, it's time. We're making some huge, huge improvements with being able to get animals out. We're moving forward. We're joining with Best Friends and Humane Society to help our over population problem. We're doing really great things, and this is also going to give us an opportunity to. There's so many different workshops and whatnot, continuing education workshops and learning labs. So, some of the workshops we can learn about new behavioral techniques, cats, Community engagement, Field Services. That'll be perfect plan for patrol officers and we will get continuing education credits to use towards our recertification.

Lind Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I feel like you're doing a great job. Thank you.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: The learning lab that I'm actually doing, because there's a learning lab included in mine is it has something to do with building a shelter. So, I thought that would be appropriate, since we are getting \$75,000 that would be a good thing to learn a little bit more about. So, we're really excited about it.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: I assume they have exhibitors? Networking is phenomenal.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: Its being held at the Link Hotel. That's the hotel that is marked for the contest. They have a drop of rooms, and that's where all of the classes and the vendors will be. There's the exhibition hall, which will have, I don't even know how many vendors, and it's a good opportunity for us to meet new vendors and possibly be able to maybe change up things that we work over, that we buy, maybe save some money.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I'm in favor. Of course, I do this with my own business. I think anytime you can go outside of the state lines, even nation lines to learn and bring it back to your Community. It's always important.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: You learn so much from them, and it's been so long that I'm so excited about this. I've made relationships with a lot of new vendors, and they're all going to be there so I'll actually get to put a person to the emails and phone calls. Like I said, this will give us education credits. I intend on sending some other staff next year, and then maybe my Animal Control Officers as well, because they don't get to attend the Animal Humane Conference in August, and that's in Albuquerque, but it's nice to get out and learn new stuff.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve.

Linda Jaramillo-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

I. ANIMAL SERVICES: Requesting Ratification of the Application for Best Friends Network Partners Paws in the Field Challenge.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: Since we partnered with Best Friends, we've received all kinds of perks and this was an infield challenge that

they sent to me on the 13th, due on the 17th. So, I kind of had to do it right away to get in because they gave us early access. What it is, is it will provide us with resources to increase our return to home dog rates in our Community. We already do a lot of the challenges that they're going to be asking us to do, such as following dogs home instead of bringing them, then even the door hanger. We scan them in the field, and we call on their microchips when they're in the field to avoid bringing them in. So, there's many things that we already do, but by participating in this, we can receive a \$1,000 grant to be used however we want to use it, and we will have other, possibly other prizes, such as humane tracks, animal Naco memberships, things like that. So, we'll get a lot of good perks from this, and we will get to increase our presence in the Community, because it also gives us, great signs and things to put it in areas they have it designed specifically for little areas too.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to approve.

Linda Jaramillo-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

14. DISCUSSION

A. ROADS: Discussion of Roadways for Micro-Blading

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: So, this is our micro seal that we asked for the money last year. We're supposed to do it last July. The weather got bad. Well, then the contractor got busy. Kept pushing so we moved it till now. We're going to do it in May, the first week of May this year. So, we put some roads down that we were going to do, and then I ended up chipping some roads. I'd like to move those roads off the list and move it to Ten Pines off of 55 in Manzano to the Apple Mountain Retreat. I'd like to do a double pin of micro about two miles to that place, because they're really busy. They have a lot of schools that go up there, a lot of people, wedding venues. I mean, that's really picking up for them. I like to take off Ice Plant, Pumpkin Patch and then Marshall Road was one that I pulled off because I submitted it this year for a double pen for next year on our school bus project. So, I like to remove that, and it's the same amount of money. We're not changing anything. All we're doing is changing the road. That's the only difference.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: What is microblading?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It's micro sealing. It's making it look like it's almost paved. It just creates another layer on top, but I like to do a double pain on Ten Pines. That way it's up there in the mountains, in fact, they get a lot more weather up there. I think it'll make the road look a lot better, smooth enough for the school buses that come down there.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: How's your subbase there?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It's good. It's already chipped sealed there's been up there. I have two spots in it that I have to fix. I'll fix those now, come April, in April, we're going to start prepping all the rows. We're going to do micro fix on all the holes we have, and we'll get those two spots fixed on it, and then we'll put this over the top.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: The only reason I ask is you did some of this microblading next to me in the subdivision? It's failing inside.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Like I said, I have two spots in it that I've been noticing that are kind of so, I'm going to grind those up, and I'm going to rechip those ourselves and re fix the base so when they go over the top, it'll stay better.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Glorieta is that what you're talking about?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: No, I'm talking about on Ten Pines.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: At Ten Pines you're going to grind it?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Just two spots. I gotta fix before we put micro over.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Will you chip seal that?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Yes, I'm gonna microchip. It's not a change in the amount. It's just changing the roads, we're going to be just move those miles to Ten Pines.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: So Microblading is like paving?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It'll look like the towns, like Torreon, Manzano roads.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: It lasts how long?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It last anywhere from four to five years. That's what we were told, I mean. But if the subbase gives, it's just like anything else.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Commissioner, it's not asphalt. It's almost like crusher fine. It seals the water out, I mean, it takes a good road and makes it better, because it seals the water out.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: It saves on maintaining?

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Oh, absolutely. That's absolutely economic. That's what you did on Ice Plant West, right?

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: It's not West. No, we chipped that one, and then we just did a fog seal, a thicker fog seal. Micro is going to be like what we did in the Towns, in the subdivisions. So, we're going to be doing Madrid, we'll do Camino Del Norte, Valdez Road and Cemetery Road will have all micro on it, and then the next two miles will be up on top of the Mountains.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: This is on maintaining on those roads make some last longer. It's cost effective to do this. It costs more to do it, but then it's balances out, and the maintaining.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: Really costing it's almost about the same as the chips but just supposed to last longer.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: If you take time and go with Leonard, he has a spreadsheet that will break down daily cost of all the different roads.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Well, I'm meeting with them tomorrow. See, there you go. I'm meeting with them tomorrow. I want to learn what you do so that can be better informed when people are coming at me asking about roads.

Leonard Lujan- County Road Superintendent: That's Why we came in front of you that way, you know, where we were switching? If we could, if you allow us to switch those roads to do that.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: It's good spend some time with Leonard, because it's, in all honesty, it's a bad balancing Act on just how many funds you have within the maintenance schedule behind it, right? Traffic, you know, the need. I think what you pointed out, the amount of buses going up there and that sort of thing, you know, that's kind of a different animal on what kind of road you know.

B. FIRE: Discussion on Consolidation of Fire Districts

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's probably best to start this off by providing some context. In late 2024 the County Fire Department went through the ISO process, which is a very comprehensive overview of the Fire Department, staffing, apparatus, response, finances. It looks at a lot of different areas. Of course, with the current structure, the way it is, ISO evaluated every Fire District, all six Fire Districts in Torrance County. Some of those ISO scores, specifically in the southern districts, did not come back, so great. Now, there are things that are being worked on right now, and Deputy Chief Sanchez is working on a number of them, as far as getting the minor issues corrected. The big issue that we have is really volunteer participation in the southern districts, and so through the ISO process, you need four people from within that district responding to every call.

As it currently stands, we have districts that don't even have four people on the roles as active members. Even if we did have those numbers, they would have to respond to every call to address this. That is one area that we can't fix through purchasing or processes or procedures. What that really means, as far as an implication for the constituents of Torrance County, if those ISO scores stay high, insurance rates for people living in those districts is going to go up substantial so this was something that Chief Winham, Deputy Chief Sanchez, were talking to the State Fire Marshal's office before my involvement at this level, at the department, of course, there was his separation from the County, but we did meet with the State Fire Marshal's office a couple weeks ago, and they are recommending consolidation to address that specific issue. What consolidation would mean would be taking the six current Fire Districts and dissolving those via resolution and combining and reestablishing a Fire District that covers the whole County that

way, and it's not for a lack of response from Volunteer Departments in Torrance County. It's just we are very heavy on the north, and we are lacking as far as participation in the south.

But if we get somebody from one of the Northern Districts responding to a fire in one of the Southern Districts, we will get credit for that response, as if they were responding directly. It is a pretty intensive process to do the reconsolidation. We've gotten a laundry list of items from the State Fire Marshal's office that we're going to have to put together. From a practical perspective, it really wouldn't have many implications. As far as the stations that are set up right now, it would be one District under one Command, but any current District Station would function as a substation of the overall district, but it would also afford us the opportunity and flexibility to move personnel and resources and equipment to different areas, whereas now with the independent districts, we can't necessarily do that to really meet the Community's need.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Can you name the fire districts for me, please.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Sorry, I can get you a map of them. It's one through six. One is going to be Duran. Two is going to be the northwest part of the County. Three the northeast part of the County, and there's different stations within those Districts, I can get you a map, Commissioner, if that would be beneficial.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Would this help Manzano? Would Manzano be included in that Fire District? How would it serve Manzano?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Well, they would be included in the overall District, certainly. If there was a need for support in Manzano, we could theoretically bring resources from other areas to help provide support within that District should a fire emergency occur.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: That's a long way to go don't you think? But that's okay.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Well, no, there's and correct me if I'm wrong. But by creating one district here in the fire season, we could conceivably move resources closer to where we perceive the fire hazards.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: That's correct.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: And house them there?

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Housing them I think we can get creative with that. I mean, it allows us to use a little bit more common sense. Why was there Districts in the first place?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: It's been a very common thing across the state Commissioner specifically in Torrance County, I'm not 100% sure. But what I can tell you is we are not the only County to go through this process. Eddy County's done it. Valencia County has done it. There's been a number of Counties over the course of the last couple years that have gone through this process to specifically address this issue. It is just because volunteer participation in more rural areas is sort of dwindling. Again, the repercussions of not doing that are, allowing fire insurance premiums to maybe get to a point where they're unaffordable for homeowners in those areas, in the time when they likely need that insurance coverage.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Next question have we looked at any MOUs we have within the Fire Department that we're going to have to redo that specify certain districts.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: I'm not aware of anything, Mr. Chair.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: The one that comes to mind, might be in Moriarty with automatic and mutual aid.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Good morning, Commission we would have to re look at the MOUs, but it shouldn't affect anything, as we would still provide automatic aid to Moriarty or other Municipalities and vice versa.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: I think it's just paperwork, just we move forward with this.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: It is a process. It certainly is, and there will be other resolutions and discussions along the way, when we get to the point where this is in consideration for approval. But we did want to put this on the radar, not only of the commission, but of the Community, in terms of what was going on and why we were considering taking this approach.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Is there any downside to funding under one district versus what we have now?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: It's not going to be really a downside to the funding. It's going to be different as it's not going to be funding separated by district based on the ISO. So essentially, what's going to happen is, when we consolidate, it's going to take all of our on-hand water, all of our water authorities, and we're going to put everything into one. I know you all remember when I came up with making the pre plans, all of it's going to go into one. When they reclassify our insurance, it could go anywhere from four to six. We'll get one lump sum, and they have stated that the County can keep, say, the district separated via line items as they are. Then give money to those areas based on what percentage they've used in the past, whether that be three or five years. It's going to take away from Grant processes, we can't apply for six grants any longer. If we go down to one district or one Fire Department, we can separate by one FDIV for that, which is where we will report our in-fers. Then we can also apply for one for fire ADD. That'll give the County the ability to apply for two grants. If you had station one in Duran that needed an apparatus, we could apply for that. But we can move resources around the County. We wouldn't have to go to SFMO. We could move this tender to District Four because we have the necessity for possible more structure fires, whether it be forest fires, anything like that.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: If I understand this right, there's a pro to lower ISO for the southern end of the County.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: It'll be County as a whole.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: So, County as a whole, I'm assuming the northern end has a better ISO southern end of the County does it offset? Or does it bring it all down? You understand what I'm saying? Does it equalize?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Yeah, I look at it, it's going to equalize. It's basically what they've explained to us. It's going to be the same ISO rating throughout the entire County.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Based on the northern side where we currently have, it's going to limit us on how many grants we can apply for. Those grants paid larger because of the district.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: They set a cap on the grants. I think this last year, the apparatus was set at \$300,000, it depends on what you apply for.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: We ever gotten multiple grants for multiple districts in the same year?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: If you recall, about two years ago, we received a cascade system, one for each district.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: That's the downside. How big of a downside is that?

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I need a better explanation as to what his question was earlier, as I represent the north, and our ISO is low. I'm going to say that I'm going to represent my district in this I do not want my district to go up because of the lack of volunteerism in the south.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: We assure you it's not going to touch the ISO for any of the districts. It's going to level it out and the County as a whole will have one ISO rating.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: You have a higher population in your district, then my district has a lower population. We're at a disadvantage just because we don't have the population that you have. But we should be equalized anyway because of that, because we are rural and we do have a forest Service, that we do have a major forest fire that affects everybody up there in the whole County, actually, but it's just because we're not as populated as you are. Does that count? Is that a factor?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Actually, if you will, allow me to call on mr. Brandon Porch. He's actually assisted with consolidations from other agencies, and he could probably go into more detail on that.

Brandon Porch- Torrance County Fire: Thank you, Commissioners. Brandon Porch, Torrance County Fire. I am a full-time employee with Torrance County. Mr. Chair, thank you. I've helped Eddy County make their transition over to a consolidation as well, along with San Miguel County when they did it, the pros and cons. Yes, Deputy Chief Sanchez is correct, we would lose our ability to apply for additional grants. But the pros come to this, if we can adjust our ISO rating completely across the County, allowing that four person response to any structural fire that we have anywhere in the County, that's going to approve the ISO rating for all persons across the County as a whole, we may take a hit initially at the

beginning, but over time, that's going to improve, and it's going to allow our ISO to drop County wide, allowing all citizens within the County to have that perk of that lower fire insurance rate.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: When you say short term, what do you mean?

Brandon Porch- Torrance County Fire: I think in the first year, we may show like a single drop in an ISO rating, just one point, but I think in the multiple years following that, we can improve that greatly. I did have a conversation with the Deputy State Fire Marshal Andrew Label yesterday on the phone, and he said that even if we did have a one-point drop, that would increase, it would improve within the year following, and probably even by two points. So potentially, everybody, including your district, Mr. Commissioner McCall, would improve greatly, lowering all of the insurance rates as a whole across the board.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Okay, I hear you, but how fast is the insurance change if we go up? I mean, none of us are insurance agents, but I'm just saying.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Beginning of the census, we had ISO inspection of District Two, I believe it was back in May of 24 and there are some people had that have been affected with the possibility of going to an ISO ten from a six, and it increased by \$300 and, you know, that's quick it's as soon as they do it, it's like they're, selling that information to the insurance companies.

Brandon Porch- Torrance County Fire: It can be quick depending on how fast the answer, the ISO Commissioner gets it put into the system, and once the insurance rates hit the market, then it can be just that quick. It can be a two-month change, or it can be a one-year change. My apologies. I do know that in the Town of Bernalillo, when we change their ISO rating from a nine six, we changed it to a four, and it changed within three months.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Mr. Chair, Mr. McCall, it was the initial discussions. I think it was our understanding that after ISO, there was a retrogression process where we could come to the table with a plan to address this specifically through consolidation, and that process was going to take about a year that we would have that amount of time and latitude in terms of making those adjustments and potential consolidations. But we are actually hearing from

constituents that those increases in insurance premiums have already taken effect, and it's been a few months since that process was complete.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Back to your comment earlier Commissioner Jaramillo what you need to do is go recruit volunteers, and why this consolidation, this isn't fixing the problem the lack of volunteers in the south. So don't kid yourself. I mean, I think we all understand that, but we need to get volunteerism up in the South.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: We need four people to answer a fire each time.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Well, that's a perk into the department, but statutorily, we're obligated to provide structural protection.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Anything in the forest belongs to the forest?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: So, things report to inferences based on structure firefighting that has to have four people, minimum, with an engine.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: So, what is the lack of volunteers? Is it County wide?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: It's nationwide? Mr. Chair, Mrs. Jaramillo, it's something that jurisdictions across the nation are seeing, and we've certainly seen with the number of other Counties within New Mexico that are consolidating for very similar reasons, that it's a trend.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Even in district One and Two, you have less volunteers than you ever had. So, is it an overall issue?

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: How's five?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Five is doing great. Three is doing great. The whole retrogression is with District Two. I mean, like I said, when I started here, they had twenty-five on the roster, we're down to two.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: So, what is happening now? On the southern end, we're showing up. I mean, are these other Districts showing up, or not?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Lately, the calls that we've had on the south side, I will say District One has been responding. They have been responding. But given the condition of their station it's inhabitable, they don't want us responding out of that station until it's fixed. District Six, however, I understand is not responding. The Chief is out due to medical issues.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Which one is district six?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: That's Willard.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: So, we don't have one there?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: We're relying on the northern side, three being Central, and then utilizing mutual aid from Two and Five for water support or Mountainair and Corona all of them.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: How is Mountainair doing, as far as volunteers?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: They are not under us. They are their own, because they're a Municipality.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Let me ask you a question. We move forward with this, and we change these Districts, essentially, is there a plan to move volunteers down to these Districts to guarantee a response? Because all of a sudden, we don't have the response. It affects the entire County, if we don't respond. What's the plan there?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: It would be to, I'm not going to say, move them down there, but it's going to guarantee a response from one of these stations that's going to count towards our reporting.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: If they don't respond?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: I can't house people there if I don't have suppression systems. That's my other issue. None of our buildings have suppression systems.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Can Mountainair respond to fires outside city limits? They can go up to the mountains and help them. If there's a structure fire?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: They are automatic mutual aid.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Are they the ones answering most of the calls for that area?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Corona and Mountainair has been assisting us.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: What about Torreon?

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: Torreon has not really been responding to anything. I will say recently, since Mr. Perea has retired, he has been available more to assist with that, but we need to get more individuals in that department that would be able to give the time. That's the whole problem with being volunteer. It's when and if they have time, they all have jobs. I've also brought up an option for reaching out to 100% of Torrance County is maybe making a flyer for recruitment and getting in line with utility companies and sending it out with that. Like, we need your help.

Brandon Porch- Torrance County Fire: If I may chime in one more time, I apologize, Mr. Commissioner. One of the things that would allow the consolidation to do is any member from any district within the County, if they're anywhere in the County, and a tone comes out, they can respond to the closest station that they are to and respond with an apparatus from that station the way it currently sits right now. Legally or not necessarily legally, but technically, they're not supposed to respond to that district and take a truck out of that station if they do not belong to that district as a volunteer. The consolidation would eliminate that allowing, say, a District Five member who is down by Duran and they get a call out down there, they can respond to the Duran station and pick up a truck and respond with it.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: So, if you have volunteers in Manzano, say, and they're established volunteers, then they could actually use the truck in Torreon.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: yes, ma'am, they can. Say they were driving on 41 and a fire broke out, and they were by District Three, which is McIntosh, they can then go in that station, get a unit, and go to the fire.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: How does that work, with the different Districts? We haven't even gone there yet, right? Where, like if Manzano did get established and they go down to Torreon, they could actually use that truck and take it over there and turn out fires.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: If Manzano was to get established as a Fire Department, it would sit within Torrance County, so that would consolidate them with us.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Then you'd let me know how you could do that, right? We just need volunteers.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: Manager, you talk to me a little bit about allowing employees of Torrance County the ability to become volunteers is now a good time, or is that something we just want to discuss?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: It could be brought up, and it's an idea that I actually had some personal experience with. They had very similar issues in Santa Fe County as far as volunteer recruitment, and they sort of instituted a program with employees, whereby if an employee was interested, they lived in the County. They lived in the District, and they were interested in volunteering. They were given four hours of Administrative Leave every Friday for five weeks to meet with the fire department and go through baseline levels of training, exterior support, emergency vehicle operations, you know, managing a hydrant that got them to the point where they could be deployed back into the field as a volunteer. Now, through that process, I want to say they did a first go around, and they got seven people that were signed up into the volunteer districts. Me being one of them. There are options as far as looking at recruitment and participation with volunteers. And I mentioned that one just because it was relatively unique. But in this you know, in Torrance County, most people that work here live in the surrounding area. And theoretically, if there was a willingness or a desire to do it. It could be an option to get them on board as a volunteer.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: It makes more sense to me and move forward with districting. But I want to have a better understanding on the plan. I think there is a risk for overall all ISO to decline. I mean, that's a very real risk. I want some thought out plans on how we're going to handle that before we implement. Option is, you know, we have One District. We could also just have Two Districts. I don't know if that's realistic or not, but it's a thought process.

Hanna Sanchez- Deputy Fire Chief: You're talking about North and South. I'd say we did think of that, but with the issue that we have with response coming from the southern side and having to solely rely on mutual aid, it didn't make sense. It made more sense to open it up County wide, with all the active volunteers we have along with our paid staff. And that would because right now, if you think about it, our paid staff, since they're located in the old superior building. They can be on the District Five roster because they're within that district. So that adds 10 more employees to their roster. They don't count on any other one for the fireside. If we open it up and dissolve those boundaries, everybody that is on the roster active at any district has access to every building for response. So that's something to think about.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: That's the lack of volunteers. That's why you're doing this. The lack of volunteers.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Yeah, I would say the lack of that four person response in the County is really the circumstance that put us in this position, and that is somewhat related to participation in the in the volunteer program, you know at large.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Well, no action is going to be taken today, regardless. But I do think we need to move forward by looking at the details before we totally confirm it.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Mr. Chair, we will sit down with the State Fire Marshal's office to just talk through some of those financial points.

C. MANAGER REPORT:

1) FY2025-2026 Budget Timeline

Misty Witt-Deputy County Manager: I'll take item one here. We just wanted to go over the FY 2025-2026 budget timeline with the Commission. This is included

in your packet as well, if you wanted to reference. But of course, we're in full budget season now. I have sent out all the budget request forms to departments. I'm starting to get those turned in. There's a deadline of March 31st for departments to turn in their budget requests for the next fiscal year, starting the first week of April. We'll start meeting with those individual departments with specific questions on different projects and requests. Then we wanted to put a placeholder in there to start having our individual meetings with you as the Commission that last week of April. If you can look at your calendars to see what would work and let Manager Barela and I know if there's a conflict, that would be April 28th through May 1st. We have tentatively blacked out to meet with Commissioners on an individual basis and then come in May, which is when we'll start having the public discussions. On May 14th tentatively to have our first interim budget discussion in the public BCC meeting and possible approval at that time. If not, we'll probably have to hold a special meeting sometime that week of May 19th, just to approve interim budgets and get it submitted in time to DFA. Then, of course, following that, we'll be looking at early July to start looking at approvals of the final budget. It's tentatively the July 9th Commission meeting to refine the budget.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: July 9th?

Misty Witt-Deputy County Manager: Yes, I think we have a regularly scheduled Commission meeting. I'm sorry. No, July 9th, excuse me, to post for the public hearing to get approval and then it would be at the July 23rd meeting. So, we would have a public hearing on the 23rd but we would have to post a couple weeks in advance. So, we would get your approval on July 9th for the public hearing.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: I thought we had to have this done before the end of June?

Misty Witt-Deputy County Manager: For interim, we have to have that submitted by June 1. For Final, they give us until July 30th, so that we can close out the year.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: So, we need to start talking about the week of May 5th?

Misty Witt-Deputy County Manager: April 28th through May 1st, I believe, when we meet with you guys individually, and then the public meetings will start May 4th.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: That's a month away.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: It will have to be in April. The last part of April I'm having shoulder surgery.

2) NM Legislative Updates

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: A quick update on the legislative session. Mr. Chair, the only thing I really wanted to bring up today was that I did get notification. I know this has gone out, but I wanted to get it to the public on record too, regarding House Bill 450. Which was the Capital Outlay bill, and what that entailed for Torrance County. There was good news on capital outlay. We requested \$3 million for the Admin Building, we received in total, \$3.75 million. Which is enough to bring us into budget based off of current estimates. But in addition to that, the board had approved a resolution identifying a number of four top projects that being the primary one. But the other three projects we requested also got fully funded. We received \$75,000 for the Animal Shelter improvement project. We received another \$350,000 to continue to move forward with the radio system upgrade at dispatch to the seven hundred system, and \$250,000 to address water improvements at the McIntosh Fire Station.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: I would say, Thank you, Mr. McCall and Jordan. Time spent there. If there's somebody, I miss it, let me know.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I emailed all our Representatives also, and the Governor's office.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I will tell you that it is it makes it super nice and easy when a county has spent their allocation prior to and you're in good standing with the state they you know, we have one or two little hiccups that we got reallocated, but for the most part, Torrance County is doing a fabulous job in spending the money they get. Legislators take note of that and are willing to give you funds. When you do that. Thank you to the staff and the management team that does get those funds spent, and it does make a difference. Thank you to all of our legislators. I think we came away with \$4.6 million is what I added up. Torrance County came out really well. Thank you.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Yeah, and I'm very happy that this money was allocated for the building, because this building is old and we need to get a proper place for our employees to work. I've had a little flack about how we

should use this money for other things in the County, but I worked in this place for 26 years, and it's time for us to build a new Admin Building for the people who work here. I'm so glad to hear that they appropriated this money.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Just to put this to the Commission as well, Mr. Chair, we did meet with Wilson and Company yesterday. The building design hasn't changed with the changing of the site. They're still progressing regarding the design on that but they will likely next meeting be presenting some site plans of how that building falls out on the current parcel. Looking for some direction from the Commission in which route they want to go. I think that's really the final thing. If the new site has been selected, how does that site plan lay out? Once they get that direction, we talked on timelines, and they're looking to have everything completed close to the end of May.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: We just start going out for bid, essentially, right?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Correct.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: In that same location that we had decided on?

D. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:

1) Commissioner McCall, District 1

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I did want to make a comment that that those funds are not in concrete yet. The Governor has a chance to line-item veto any if she chooses. It'll happen because the appropriations are falling in line with public safety and some other things. I don't think we're in jeopardy of losing any of those. But just, they're not concrete quite yet. They can veto it. The government can know any capital outlay sheet, so choose line item. I don't have much of a report. Could you give me a report on where we sit at the fairgrounds and the design?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Mr. Chair, Commissioner McCall, the contract has been executed with full design with Studio Southwest. We've had a couple of project kickoff meetings. We actually have a site visit with them scheduled next Thursday to do a walk through with facilities so they can identify utilities. But we are moving forward. We also talked to them about timelines. I think this project will be ready to bid. We're also looking at doing a DMARC

procurement, which is a construction manager at risk, essentially, that's bringing the project contractor on right now to aid with the design process, so we'll also be working on that procurement. Will likely be in a position to get this project started in late July. But with fair, we've requested that the project instruction does not start until early September, so there isn't any issues with either the livestock school that's coming through Torrance County this year or the Torrance County fair. But we're hoping, within the next couple months to actually have that contractor on board, in June, or end of June, we'll have final design ready to move forward.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: So, will both these buildings be built, one first and then the other? Can we simultaneously build both?

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: There'll be some contractors in Estancia that you know they don't typically hear.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: These guys might be pulling their hairs up, but that's why, what Manager Barela had mentioned is bringing on project manager. Which I mean on buildings this big, I'm in favor of that, there is going to be a lot of money, a lot of time, a lot of delays saved by somebody that knows the trade. As you know, everything is in a slice and between us and them, he's looking out for our interest system, the contractor's interest, or something like that. So that's the purpose of it.

Kevin McCall- County Vice-Chair: I was absent at the last meeting, and I think I read in a minute that you discussed that Duran water is complete?

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Duran water is complete.

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Duran water tank project is complete. We've signed off on all the final approvals and paperwork on that, and that has been dedicated over it is up in functioning.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: Do you have any issues with the pipeline, though, going there that wasn't part of the job, right?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: That's correct. There were some items, as far as water lines, that were outside of the purview of our involvement that still likely need to be addressed. The one issue that we had that we took care of was in one of the meter valves. The lines that run to the meter valves broke under pressure because it was Pyrex. So, we had the contractor go back out and replace that with

steel piping. But that was the only real issue within our scope of the project, and getting that up and functioning, and I think that has been rectified.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: So, there is another issue entirely?

J. Jordan Barela- County Manager: Correct.

2) Commissioner Schwebach, District 2

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: I really don't have a whole lot to report. I do want to say thank you to your staff and the good work they've done. I think, time and time again, it always amazes me. On seeing new direction, new ideas, forward momentum. It's just, it's real pleasure just watching it come together and clear across the board. I look at our Animal Center, Sheriff's Department just, thank you for the level of professionalism that has come up with the attention to detail. It's moving, and I like it.

3) Commissioner Jaramillo, District 3

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I went out with Danette Cabber and visited the solid waste landfill and one of the transfer stations. I was amazed at what a big operation this is. I just want to give kudos to Danette. This is major operation. I didn't realize how big it was. I had never been out there. It's amazing what they do. It's sad that we have so much trash that we have to process, but they do it very well, and they're very systematic about the way they do. I went out to the landfill, I'm just amazed by the whole project, the whole thing. Now I want to recycle. We should recycle because they have a program where they, well, you can take recycling and they separate it at the transfer stations, and then they take that, and they make it into bales. Of course, it brings money in for the County. But I feel that we should all recycle. I'm guilty of not recycling. We need to recycle more.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: I have my own cardboard baler. I make my own bales but the dirty little secret on the plastic is, it's all going to landfill right now. In our landfill. Albuquerque is on the field, and they may have got it backed up, but a lot of it goes straight into the landfill just because the market says the plastic is not there. I mean, plastic is evil. But corrugated cardboard.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: They do recycle the cardboard too and make it into bales. It's just amazing what they do. Now I've been driving more

roads in my district and just visiting with people, or people are calling me more and more. I attended the LEPC meeting yesterday, very informative. Then I went to the EMWT meeting last night, and they're moving right along.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: You're making us look bad.

Linda Jaramillo- County Commissioner: I'm not trying to make you look bad.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: No, I'm being serious, thank you for being so involved and learning the system.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- A. COMMISSION:** Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Executive Session Item 3.A. Regarding Filling the Fire Chief Position.
- B. COMMISSION:** Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Executive Session Item 3.B, the Purchase, Acquisition or Disposal of Real Property.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to move into Executive Session.

Kevin McCall-County Vice-Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Absent: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

Entered executive session 11:20 AM

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to return from Executive Session.

Kevin McCall-County Vice-Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

Returned from executive session 12:55 PM

16. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS ABOVE:

- A. COMMISSION:** Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Executive Session Item 3.A. Regarding Filling the Fire Chief Position.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to move forward with drafting and executing a contract with Gary Smith with the parameters we set forth within the meeting to be ratified at a later date.

Kevin McCall-County Vice-Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

- B. COMMISSION:** Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Executive Session Item 3.B, the Purchase, Acquisition or Disposal of Real Property.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to move forward with negotiations and appraisal for lot R027739.

Kevin McCall-County Vice-Chair: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

17. Announcement of the next Board of County Commissioner's Meeting:

April 9, 2025 at 9:00AM

18. SIGNING OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

19. ADJOURNED.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: Motion to adjourn.

Kevin McCall-County Vice-Chair: Seconds the motion.

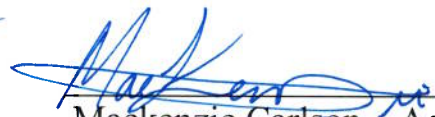
Roll Call Vote: Linda Jaramillo – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach
– County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: - Yes:

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12:58 PM



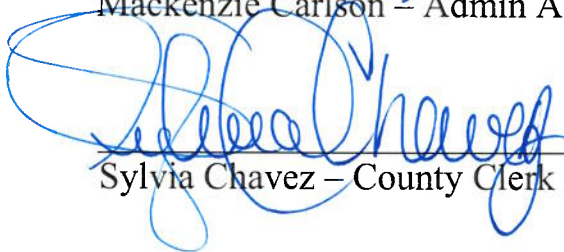
Ryan Schwebach – Chairman



Mackenzie Carlson – Admin Assistant



Date



Sylvia Chavez – County Clerk

The video and audio of this meeting are available upon request.