

FINAL
Torrance County Board of Commissioners
Regular Commission Meeting
November 12, 2025
9:00AM

Commissioners Present:

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

Others Present:

JORDAN BARELA-COUNTY
MISTY WITT-DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER
MICHAEL GARCIA- COUNTY ATTORNEY
SYLVIA CHAVEZ-COUNTY CLERK
MACKENZIE CARLSON- ADMINASTRATIVE ASSISTANT 1
DON GEON – PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR

1. Call to Order- Chairman Schwebach called the meeting to order at 9:03AM

2. Opening and Invocation

Chairman Schwebach called the meeting to order at 9:03AM

Commissioner Jaramillo led the invocation, offering a prayer for guidance, wisdom, and protection for Torrance County departments and their staff. She specifically mentioned the importance of ensuring safe and effective services for all residents.

3. Chairman Schwebach then asked for any proposed changes to the agenda.
County Manager Barela confirmed that there were no changes to the agenda, and the meeting proceeded as planned.

4. Proclamations- None

Chairman Schwebach presented motions to approve:

1. Meeting Minutes Approved:

a) October 22, 2025 Regular Commission Meeting

Motion: Chairman Schwebach motioned to approve the minutes; **seconded** by Commissioner Jaramillo.

- Roll Call Vote:

- Schwebach – Abstain
- McCall – Yes
- Jaramillo – Yes

b) October 27, 2025 Special Commission Meeting

Motion: Chairman Schwebach motioned to approve the minutes; **seconded** by Commissioner McCall.

- Roll Call Vote:

- Schwebach – Yes
- McCall – Yes
- Jaramillo – Yes

c) October 29, 2025 Special Commission Meeting

Motion: Chairman Schwebach motioned to approve the minutes; **seconded** by Commissioner Jaramillo.

- Roll Call Vote:

- Schwebach – Abstain
- McCall – Yes
- Jaramillo – Yes

10. Payables Approved:

a) October 16, 2025 through October 30, 2025 Payables

Motion: Chairman Schwebach motioned to approve the minutes; **seconded** by Commissioner McCall.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes
- Discussion: No amendments were proposed.

11. Torrance County Administrative Building Update

- a) County Manager Jordan Barela provided a comprehensive update:
 - The administrative building project has a budget of \$14–15 million.
 - Design completion is expected within five months.
 - A meeting was held with Wilson and Company regarding floor plan revisions due to property relocation.

Mark Beck, Wilson and Company:

- Discussed the redesign process, including adapting to site constraints and meeting ADA compliance.
- Estimated completion timeline for final design: mid-March 2026.
- Emphasized the importance of early procurement to avoid project delays.

Commissioner Discussion:

- Commissioner McCall stressed staying on budget and reducing contingency costs.
- Chairman Schwebach highlighted the necessity of aligning the design with future county operational needs.
- Commissioner Jaramillo discussed square footage per department and per employee. Jaramillo expressed importance of future storage needs.

Acknowledgments & Relationship Improvements

- Commissioners acknowledged:
 - Prior “rocky times” with Wilson & Co.

- Significant recent improvement in communication and project management.
- Expressed appreciation for Wilson & Co.'s responsiveness and commitment to rebuilding trust.

12. Torrance County Permanent Fund Proposal

- a) Jordan Barela introduced a request to publish the title and general summary of the Permanent Fund ordinance.

Rob Burpo explained:

- A permanent fund differs from a reserve fund as the principal cannot be spent without public approval, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.
- Benefits include future fiscal flexibility, but the commission must balance between immediate needs and long-term reserves.

Commissioner Discussion:

- Schwebach emphasized the importance of public education before approval.
- McCall suggested a detailed pros and cons report for transparency.

Motion: Schwebach motioned, Jaramillo seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

13. Adoption of Resolution- None

14. Election Results and Recounts

- a) Sylvia Chavez presented the 2025 election results:
 - Detailed voter turnout and read race-specific results.
 - Noted potential recounts for:

- Estancia mayoral race
- Moriarty city council positions

Discussion:

- Chavez explained the recount process and deadlines.
- Commissioners debated the cost and necessity of recounts, agreeing to proceed only where margins were narrow.

Special Election – Estancia School District:

- Chavez announced a special election due to bond documentation discrepancies.
- All-mail ballot election with early voting from February 17 and election day March 17.
- Commissioners approved the plan, emphasizing cost management and community notification.

Motion: Jaramillo motioned, Schwebach seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

14. Prior year invoices to the Central Correction Facility for Inmate Housing

- b) Reecie (TCSO) informed the Commission that the Sheriff's Office recently received invoices on October 28 from the Deputy Manager.
- The invoices date back to 2024 and concern an inmate housed at the State Penitentiary, placed there under a judge's direction.
- She explained that the delay in billing was not due to county processes, but rather the penitentiary's billing timeline.
- Reecie:
 - Noted that the invoices were significantly delayed, arriving nearly a year after the services were provided.
 - Explained the inmate was incarcerated per judicial order, and therefore the county is responsible for the associated housing costs.
 - Contacted the State Penitentiary to request more timely and consistent billing in the future.

- Reported that the penitentiary staff were unable to commit to improving timeliness, citing high volume and workload constraints.
- Stated that despite the delay, the billing appears to be accurate and valid, and the county is obligated to pay.

Motion: McCall motioned, Schwebach seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

Commission Notes

- Commissioners acknowledged the explanation.
 - Discussion emphasized the importance of keeping county records aligned with state billing cycles, even when invoices arrive late.
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14. Ratification of a Transportation Project Fund Grant Agreement

- c) Jordan Barela thanked the Chair and noted that Road Superintendent Leonard Lujan was not present, so he would present on his behalf.
- Explained that Items 14C and 14D involve two very similar TPF grant agreements.
- Reminded the Commission that in March they approved resolutions identifying two roads for TPF funding:
 - Alan Ayers Road – approx. 4.5 miles
 - Charlie Breckenridge Road – approx. 1.5 miles
- Described the TPF process:
 - County submits a resolution identifying roads.
 - State issues the formal grant agreements for execution.
 - Typical cost share: 95% State / 5% County.
- Confirmed the local match for both projects was already budgeted for the current fiscal year.
- Reported that DOT was informed on November 3 that the agreements would be placed on this meeting's agenda.
- Explained that DOT warned that if the county did not return the executed agreements by November 7, funding would not be guaranteed.

- Under this deadline, Jordan executed the agreements ahead of today's meeting to ensure the county did not lose project funding.
 - Item 14C specifically covers the 4.5-mile segment of Alan Ayers Road.
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Commission Question & Clarification

Commissioner Jaramillo:

Asked whether the Road Superintendent determines which roads are selected, or whether the Commission has input in the process.

Jordan Barela:

- Explained that the Road Superintendent provides recommendations on which roads should be submitted for TPF funding.
 - Clarified that these recommendations are not final.
 - Stated that the Commission retains full authority:
 - Commissioners approve the formal resolution naming the roads.
 - This provides opportunity for Commission input and modifications before submission to the State.
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Item 14C – Approval of TPF Grant Agreement for Ayers Road (4.5 miles)

Motion: Schwebach motioned, Jaramillo seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes
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Item 14D – Approval of TPF Grant Agreement for Charlie Breckenridge Road (1.5 miles)

Motion: Schwebach motioned, Jaramillo seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:

- Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes
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14. Animal Welfare Fund Grant

- e) Dannette Langdon requested approval of a \$138,000 grant to expand animal welfare kennel space.
- Funded items:
 - Prefabricated indoor kennels
 - Outdoor kennels with utilities and site prep

Commissioner Discussion:

- McCall emphasized urgent need for additional space.

Motion: Schwebach motioned, Jaramillo seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes
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14. Leadership Development Agreement

- f) Deputy County Manager Misty Witt presented a proposal for executive leadership training with Sarah Douglas and Company LLC.
- Focus: Supervisory and elected officials professional development.
- Includes evaluation period before expansion.

Commissioner Discussion:

- Chairman Schwebach: "Will this training impact daily operations?"
 - Manager Barela: "Minimal disruption; sessions are scheduled for off-peak times."
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Motion: Schwebach motioned, McCall seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

14. Domestic Violence Coordination Services

- g) County Manager Jordan Barela explained the selection of Jarrah Medina:
 - \$30,000 for coordination services
 - \$10,000 for emergency shelter operations and supplies

Discussion:

- Commissioners highlighted the importance of consistent services.

Motion: Schwebach motioned, Jaramillo seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

14. Third Quarter Restrictive Housing Report

- h) Jordan Barela addressed the Commission, noting that the Restricted Housing Report was included in the Commission's packet, but not in the public packet.
 - Explained that this report contains personal identifying information (PII) for individuals held in restrictive housing, and therefore cannot be publicly released.
 - Emphasized that state law requires the Commission to review and approve the report in order for it to be forwarded to:
 - New Mexico Counties, and
 - The New Mexico Department of Corrections (NMDOC).
 - Confirmed that approval is a compliance requirement, not a policy change.

Motion, Discussion & Vote

- Minimal discussion followed; Commissioners agreed this is a routine compliance approval.

Motion: Schwebach motioned, Jaramillo seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

14. Torrance County Fairgrounds – Shade Structure

i) County Manager Jordan Barela outlined four demolition options:

1. Demolish the entire lower structure
2. Retain a 16-foot shade structure (Option 2)
3. Demolish lower structure and half of stage structure
4. Demolish everything

Discussion:

- McCall requested formal direction for early work.
- Schwebach emphasized preserving picnic and vendor space.

Motion: Schwebach motioned, McCall seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

j) Additional Fairgrounds Discussion:

- McCall suggested a lean-to shade structure for hog wash racks.
- Barela confirmed budget overage of \$420,000, but essential improvements prioritized.

Motion: Schwebach motioned, McCall seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – Yes
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes

Power Ford Diagnostic Charge

k) Reecie (TCSO)

- The issue concerned a brand-new 2024 Ford Expedition experiencing a front axle shaft boot (rubber boot) failure.
- County staff and commissioners explained that they were instructed by the warranty provider to bring the vehicle to Power Ford for diagnosis.
- After completing diagnostics, Ford denied warranty coverage, stating the damage was caused by the vehicle being driven in mud, which allegedly caused the boot to tear.

Speaker Details & Commentary

Commissioner McCall

- Explained he became personally involved because he had strongly recommended the County purchase Ford vehicles.
- Contacted Rob Sneed, General Manager of Power Ford, to discuss the issue.
- Reported that even the dealership understood the reasoning was questionable, as:
 - *“Why can’t you drive a four-wheel-drive Expedition in mud?”*
- Felt the warranty denial was unreasonable since the vehicle was being used within expected conditions for a 4WD unit.
- Noted that while the dealership agreed the reasoning was weak, the warranty decision came from Ford corporate, not the local dealership.

Chairman Schwebach

- Questioned: “Why should we approve this if we think it should be warranty?”
- Wanted clarity on whether the dealership or Ford determined the denial.
 - Staff confirmed: Ford corporate denied it, not Power Ford.

Purpose of the Request

- Staff confirmed the \$104.93 diagnostic fee remains unpaid.
- Approval is required because the purchase occurred without prior authorization, even though the County followed warranty instructions.

Motion: Schwebach motioned, Jaramillo seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
 - Schwebach – No
 - McCall – Yes
 - Jaramillo – Yes
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Commission takes brief recess at 11:15AM

Commission returns from recess at 11:22AM

15. Budget Updates and Project Priorities

a) County Manager Barela

- Commissioner McCall: Projects over budget but value engineering may reduce costs.
 - Key legislative priorities for ICIP 2026 session:
 - New county administration building
 - Radio system upgrade
 - Urgent care/ER study
 - Emergency Management Facility and Training Center:
 - Studio Southwest proposal received
 - \$50,000 allocated from ICIP
 - Planning underway for red building renovation
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Legislative Priorities

b) County Manager Barela

- Dispatchers recognized as first responders – improves retention and retirement benefits
 - Delinquent mobile home tax recovery – MVD authority
 - Urgent care facilities – rural healthcare access
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Dispatch Center Staffing

- Currently 7 dispatchers; minimum staffing 8
 - HR actively recruiting
 - MOUs with Moriarty and Estancia require updates
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Water System Compliance

- 10,500 residents served by community water systems
 - Discussion on real-time data for compliance enforcement
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15. UNM Economic Study Proposal

c) Deputy County Manager

- Proposed \$59,000 study by UNM Bureau of Business & Economic Research
 - SWOT analysis, workforce, and commuting patterns
 - Funded potentially via Economic Development Grant
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15. Rescue Vehicles

d) County Fire Chief Gary Smith

- Rescue 13 & 14 transmissions failed due to high mileage
 - Replacement costs ~\$10,000 per vehicle
 - Discussion: secure funding for at least one immediately
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15. Clerks Report

e) County Clerk Sylvia Chavez

- The Clerk emphasized that both the Clerk's Office and the Assessor's Office are responsible for the restoration and preservation of historic county records.
- These records are in urgent need of repair, and the project remains a priority for the offices involved.
- The Clerk acknowledged that ICIP funding has been provided in the past, but noted that:
 - Additional funding is needed to fully complete the restoration project.
 - She asked that this need be kept in mind as a funding priority moving forward.
- Project progress slowed due to the recent election cycle, which limited the ability to move forward as planned.
- A third vendor recently approached the office:
 - The vendor is local (based in Albuquerque).
 - They offered a more favorable deal than previous options.
 - Choosing this vendor would keep the project within New Mexico, rather than sending materials out of state (e.g., to Texas).

Action / Follow-Up Notes

- Consideration of additional ICIP funding for completion of the project.
- Review of the new vendor proposal from Albuquerque.
- Continued prioritization of historic record preservation and repair as an ongoing capital need.

15. Managers Repot

f) County Manager Barela

Upcoming Commission Meeting Schedule

- The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for December 10.
- A meeting is currently on the calendar for the day after Thanksgiving, but:
 - Traditionally, this meeting is not held due to the holiday.
 - The Commission may change this practice if desired.

Possible Need for a Special Meeting

- A special meeting may be required soon due to urgent dispatch staffing issues.
- Purpose would be to review and approve new MOUs necessary for shift coverage.

Dispatch Center Staffing Concerns

Background provided by the County Manager:

- The Dispatch Center is experiencing critical staffing shortages.
- As of today, only 7 dispatchers are available for scheduling.
 - Minimum staffing requirement is 8.
- Over the last three months, approximately 3 dispatchers have resigned.
- Dispatch has not been fully staffed for some time.

Challenges in Hiring

- There have been applicants, but:
 - Many do not pass background checks, drug screenings, or other required screenings.
 - These requirements are strict due to the sensitive nature of dispatch work.
- HR is actively involved in:
 - Advertising the positions.
 - Expanding outreach for potential applicants.

Immediate Actions Being Taken

- Dispatch Director Selena has:
 - Reached out to Santa Fe County and Valencia County (sister agency) regarding call overflow support.
 - Continued conversations are ongoing.
- Existing MOUs with law enforcement (used for temporary shift coverage) have expired.
 - This means dispatch cannot currently bring in outside officers to help cover shifts.

Planned Next Steps

- The County Manager will draft:
 - A new MOU with Moriarty.
 - A new MOU with Estancia.
- These agreements would allow law enforcement from those jurisdictions to assist with dispatch shift coverage.
- Once drafted, the MOUs may require rapid approval, prompting the need for a special Commission meeting.

Road Speed Limits

- Chairman Schwebach emphasized speed enforcement on unmarked roads
 - Suggested better signage and legal enforcement
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15. Commissioners' Report

g) Commissioners' Updates

- **McCall:** Fair Board presentation, admin building updates
 - **Schwebach:** Family updates, veterans' ceremony
 - **Jaramillo:** Firefighter training, land grants, Soil & Water District activities
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16. Executive Session- None


17. Announcement of the next Board of County Commissioners Meeting:

Next meeting: December 10, 2025

18. signing of official documents

19. Adjournment


Meeting adjourned at 12:43PM.



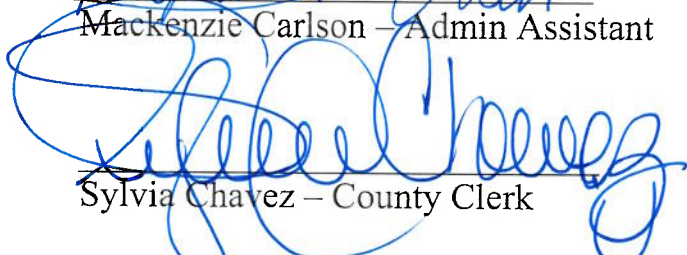
Ryan Schwebach – Chairman



Date



Mackenzie Carlson – Admin Assistant



Sylvia Chavez – County Clerk

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