

**Final Copy**  
**Torrance County Board of Commissioners**  
**Special Commission Meeting**  
**April 2, 2026 10:00 AM**

**Commissioners Present:**

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

**Others Present:**

**JORDAN BARELA-COUNTY MANAGER**  
**MICHELE JONES-DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER**  
**MICHAEL GARCIA- COUNTY ATTORNEY – Via Zoom**  
**SYLVIA CHAVEZ-COUNTY CLERK**  
**SENAIDA ANAYA- CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK**  
**DON GOEN – PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** The special meeting of the Torrance County Commission was called to order on April 2, 2026 at 10:00AM by Chairman Schwebach.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION**

Pledge led by **Chairman Schwebach**, **Commissioner McCall** said Invocation.  
Invocation led by: **Commissioner McCall**

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**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA – No Changes**

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT (Comment limited to TWO Minutes)**

**Speaker: Tiffany Wang (Innovation Law Lab Representative)**

Key Points:

- **Contract Timeline Concerns:**
  - ICE/CoreCivic contract expired October 31, 2025
  - Facility continued detaining individuals without legal authority
  - Commission attempted to modify an already expired contract (Dec 30, 2025)
  - Jan 9, 2026: New Mexico DOJ warned contract modification is likely invalid
  - March 31, 2026: Invalid extension expired
  - April 2, 2026: Commission attempting to backdate another extension
- **Legal & Ethical Concerns:**
  - Questioned legality of extending a twice-expired contract
  - Criticized reliance on CoreCivic as intermediary instead of direct ICE communication
  - Warned of serious legal liability for the county

- Human Impact:
    - Highlighted inhumane detention conditions
    - Emphasized impact on hundreds of detained individuals
  - Call to Action:
    - Urged commission to end involvement and “complicity”
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**Speaker: Joie Michaels (Clinical Social Worker)**

Focus: Mental health and medical consequences of detention conditions

Key Points:

- Psychological Impacts:
    - Long-term post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
    - Anxiety, depression, hypervigilance, nightmares
    - Mood disorders and major depressive disorder (MDD)
  - Lack of Care:
    - No access to mental health treatment, even when requested
  - Medical Consequences:
    - Mind-body connection leading to reduced life expectancy
    - Increased mortality risk
  - Severe Risks:
    - Suicidal ideation and potential deaths
    - Referenced 45+ deaths in detention facilities
  - Position:
    - Described detention as inhumane and potentially illegal
    - Urged immediate termination of current practices
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2. Public Comment – Remote (Zoom)

**Speaker: Samuel Schropp (Former Torrance County Commissioner)**

Background:

- Former District 3 Commissioner, now residing in Costa Rica

Key Points:

- Economic Concern:
    - Acknowledged past reliance on facility for jobs and local economy
  - Warnings & Trends:
    - Stated “writing is on the wall” for private prisons
    - Increasing political pressure nationwide against private detention
  - CoreCivic Risk:
    - Corporation may close facility and relocate
    - Referenced prior warning from Warden (2023)
  - Contract Instability:
    - Repeated 30-day extensions seen as warning signs
  - Legal Outlook:
    - Unlikely CoreCivic will fight New Mexico restrictions on private prison contracts
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**Speaker: Ian Phillibaum (Innovation Law Lab)**

Focus: Contract violations and compliance failures

Key Points:

- Contract Status:
  - Reaffirmed contract invalid since Oct 31, 2025
- Major Violations (PBNS Standards):
  - Medical Care: Delays and neglect putting lives at risk
  - Water & Sanitation: Shortages, sewage flooding
  - Legal Access: No law library access, mail delays, blocked legal visits
  - Infrastructure: Facility (built 1990) deemed unfit for habitation
  - Staffing: security gaps due to understaffing
- Risk:
  - County exposed to significant legal liability

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**Speaker: PJ Podesta (Innovation Law Lab)**

Focus: Testimonies from detained individuals

Key Points (Direct Reports from Detainees):

- Living Conditions:
  - Unsanitary bathrooms, lack of disinfection
  - Poor or absent medical care
  - No recreation
- Psychological Harm:
  - Feelings of kidnapping and distress
  - Impact on families (children suffering mentally)
- Facility Conditions:
  - Described as “state of collapse”
  - Electrical outages disrupting legal visits
- Basic Needs Issues:
  - Reports of no water, poor food
- Serious Medical Neglect:
  - Example: detainee with possible cancer receiving no adequate care
- Legal Concerns:
  - Claims of unfair hearings and false testimony
- Conclusion:
  - Systemic failure by CoreCivic and ICE
  - Urged commission to end contract instead of extending it

## 5. APPROVALS/ACTION ITEM

- a. **MANAGER: Request Approval of a Contract Modification Between Torrance County and the US Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Extending the Period of Performance from March 31, 2026, through April 30, 2026.**

Manager Jordan Barela Presented

1. Contract Extension

- Primary purpose is to:
  - Extend the current contract period through April 30, 2026

- Intended as a short-term continuation of services

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## 2. Required Contract Updates

- Modification includes:
  - New federal wage determination
    - Effective April 1, 2026
    - Required for compliance
  - Updated collective bargaining agreement (CBA)
    - Specific to TCDF employees
    - Included in commission packet materials

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## 3. Transition to Direct Federal Contract

- CoreCivic is negotiating a direct contract with ICE
  - Would eliminate Torrance County as an intermediary

### Expected Outcome:

- Negotiations anticipated to be completed within ~30 days
- If approved:
  - Current Intergovernmental Service Agreement (IGSA) will:
    - Sunset
    - Not be renewed

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## 4. Legislative Context

- Referenced House Bill 9 - Immigrant Safety Act

### Key Details:

- Passed in most recent legislative session
- Effective Date: May 20, 2026

### Implication:

- Proposed contract extension:
  - Will not conflict with upcoming law
  - Structured to remain compliant before law takes effect

**Motion:** Chairman Schwebach motions to approve. Commission McCall seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
  - Schwebach – Yes
  - McCall – Yes
  - Jaramillo – Yes
  - **Motion Carried**

## **b. CLERK: Request Approval of Canvassing of the Corona Public School Bond Election.**

Torrance County Clerk Sylvia Chavez

- Presented results of the Corona School District special election (bond/question measure)
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#### Election Participation

- Ballots mailed out: 68
  - Ballots returned: 33
  - Rejected ballots: 9
    - Reason: Missing signatures
  - Valid ballots counted: 24
    - All processed via machine tabulation
    - No hand count required
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#### Jurisdiction Context

- Corona School District spans multiple counties:
    - Torrance County
    - Lincoln County
    - Socorro County
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#### Results

- Torrance County results:
    - Passed: 13
    - Failed: 11
  - Overall District Outcome:
    - Measure FAILED
    - Reason: Did not pass in other counties, despite passing locally in Torrance County
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#### Recount Clarification

- Clerk clarified:
    - No recount applicable
    - Reason:
      - Measure is a bond/question issue, not a candidate race
      - State statute limits recounts to candidate elections with narrow margins
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#### 2. Additional Election Inquiry

Speaker Chairman Schweback:

- Asked about Estancia bond question
- Response (Clerk):
- Already canvassed at previous regular meeting
  - No issues reported
  - Results finalized without complications

**Motion:** Chairman Schwebach motions to approve. Commission McCall seconded.

- Roll Call Vote:
  - Schwebach – Yes
  - McCall – Yes
  - Jaramillo – Yes
  - **Motion Carried**

**6. Announcement of the next Board of County Commissioner’s Meeting**  
Regular Meeting: April 8, 2026 at 9AM

## **7. SIGNING OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**


#### **Administrative Discussion**

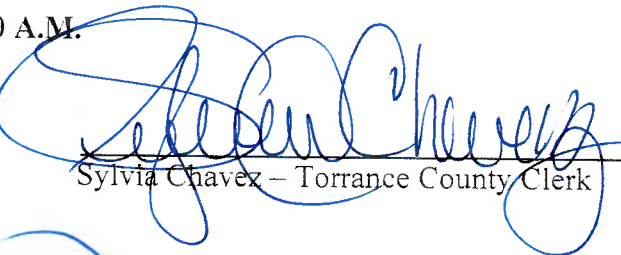
- Question raised regarding meeting notices:
  - Whether to include day of the week or just the date
- Response indicated:
  - Date-only format is acceptable

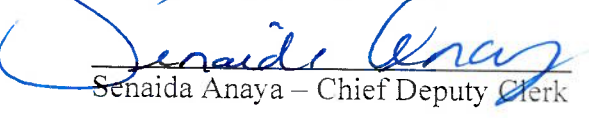
**ACTION TAKEN:** . Chairman Schwebach moves to adjourn, Commissioner McCall seconds the motion, No further discussion,

- all Commissioners in favor:
- **Motion Carried**

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:20 A.M.**

  
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Chairman Ryan Schwebach

  
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Sylvia Chavez – Torrance County Clerk

  
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Senaida Anaya – Chief Deputy Clerk

4-22-2026  
Date

The video of this meeting can be viewed in its entirety on the Torrance County NM website, Audio discs of this meeting can be purchased in the Torrance County Clerk's office and the audio of this meeting will be aired on our local radio station KXNM.