



Thursday, August 20, 2019

**COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES**

11:00 a.m.

**Location: Grand Canyon Conference Room –
Second Floor, 219 E. Cherry Ave., Flagstaff, AZ 86001**

Present: Chairwoman Lena Fowler, Vice Chair Jim Parks, Supervisor Elizabeth Archuleta, Supervisor Art Babbott joined the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

Absent: Supervisor Matt Ryan

Also Present: Bob Holmes and Anna Ma from Nexxus Consulting, County Manager James Jayne, Public Affairs Director Eric Peterson, Sheriff Jim Driscoll, Deputy County Manager Lucinda Andreani, Deputy County Manager Marie Peoples, County Attorney William (Bill) Ring, County Assessor Armando Ruiz, Special Initiatives Director Kim Musselman, Executive Assistant-District 3 Gregory Nelson, Economic Development Director Chris Pasterz, Forest Restoration Coordinator Jay Smith, Clerk of the Board Lindsay Daley

Special Session:

1. Discussion and update by Nexxus Consultants regarding advocacy concerns. **County Manager/Facilities**

Chairwoman Fowler started the meeting at 11:14 a.m. Chairwoman Fowler welcomed those in attendance.

Public Affairs Director Eric Peterson welcomed everyone and stated there will be a tour after the discussion if interested. He also introduced Bob Holmes and Anna Ma with Nexxus Consulting.

Mr. Holmes thanked the Board and others for having him. He provided a federal overview and outlook explaining that the federal budget has to be completed by September 30. He explained there is a Democratic house and Republic senate and they are not working very well together at this time. He also explained that with the recent shootings in El Paso Texas, gun issues will be at the forefront. He also explained that regarding immigration, Congress is still trying to find a path

regarding the issue. Regarding the Surface Transportation bill, the senate has passed a bill out of committee and the house has also produced one. This is where there may be bipartisan consensus. The challenge will be finding a funding mechanism. They will need to find a revenue source, which likely will be a user fee.

Ms. Ma explained that everyone is talking about gun control and climate change has come and gone. She can see the delegation working together on transportation. She stated that Senator McSally and Senator Sinema have been working on this issue. She also stated that Representative Grijalva has been working on climate issues and forest restoration.

County Attorney Bill Ring spoke about the poor condition of I-17 and that it is important to the tourism industry and the County. Mr. Holmes stated that a grant for \$90 million has been provided to Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to help improve the conditions north of Black Canyon City. Mr. Ring stated the County is hindered by lack of infrastructure.

Mr. Holmes asked if the County took a position on I-11. They stated no. County Manager Jayne explained that I-11 does not have an impact to Coconino County and explained why I-11 would be bad for the County. He stated that in rural areas, ADOT is not building for the future.

Deputy County Manager Lucinda Andreani spoke about transportation issues holding back the country's economy. Mr. Holmes explained that this is one of the reasons Congress wants to get the issue resolved. Director Peterson stated a bill has been introduced and Ms. Ma stated they will keep an eye on the bill. Mr. Holmes stated there is no appetite for a gas tax increase so it will likely go to a user fee.

Supervisor Archuleta asked how the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) proposal is doing with creating an endowment fund. Mr. Holmes stated it is not going anywhere but may peak back up next session.

Director Peterson explained there are pressing items for the County such as the Museum Fire and Flood mitigation effort. Mr. Holmes complimented everything the County has done. He stated he has been in contact with Kevin Farmer from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). He stated he is going to draft a letter for Senator McSally and Congressman O'Halleran to send to NRCS, since they have both agreed to do a letter.

There was a discussion about the local Forest Service representatives stating they have to fund the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team effort, when there was a belief that BAER is usually funded with federal funds. Deputy County Manager Andreani stated that the County is pursuing Resource Advisory Committee funds for work on Bill Williams Mountain. Supervisor Archuleta stated there are dedicated funding sources and BAER projects should not be funded with local monies. There was also a discussion about a need for the federal government to invest in restoration.

Supervisor Art Babbott entered the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

Forest Restoration Coordinator Jay Smith spoke about the Camp Navajo Army Depot and how they are trying to transfer land to the state because the Department of Defense does not allow

private industry to be on the land. They need an 8,000 foot rail spur – they currently have a 4,000 foot rail spur. There will be a bill proposed for this. This may allow industry to move forward.

There was a discussion about economic development in the region. Chairwoman Fowler spoke about the re-employment center being opened for Navajo Generating Station (NGS) employees and 250-300 people were there. Mr. Holmes stated that Congressman O'Halleran has authored a bill that addresses NGS. Director Peterson spoke about what is in the bill.

County Assessor Armando Ruiz spoke about a timing issues that exists and that NGS is shutting down this year; however, the assessment timeline is delayed. He explained that the impacts hit sooner rather than later in regards to the timing and total impact to those jurisdictions. Mr. Holmes stated this should be addressed with Congressman O'Halleran so he can include it in the bill.

There was a discussion regarding forest restoration. Mr. Holmes stated that Senator McSally has introduced a bill regarding this issue and that all of the county's reforms are in there. He stated that Congressman O'Halleran is getting push back from Pasqual from the eastern counties. Supervisor Babbott explained the provisions of the bill. There was a discussion about our local forest having authorities that they are not using and having the authority done legislatively will make it clear.

There was a discussion about tourism in the area. Mr. Holmes stated that he ran into Dan Smith the Director of Parks and that he wants to stay in touch regarding the north rim issue. Chairwoman Fowler stated she is having a multi-agency meeting with the Navajo Nation, City of Page, concessionaires and law enforcement about the opportunity of keeping the north rim open during the winter. Chairwoman Fowler stated she appreciates the study that was done about keeping the park open on north rim during the winter. She is hearing that Grand Canyon Conservancy is not in favor of this and she is not sure why.

Chairwoman Fowler also provided an update on the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wave tourist attraction permitting issue. She stated the BLM got a phone call from the Department of the Interior to change the 20 lotteries to 96 lotteries a day to access the Wave attraction. She explained that the BLM put out a public notice about the proposed change and 85% of the people that commented were opposed to the change. She stated the proposal will go through EIS to complete the process and that Senator McSally has been engaged on this issue. She is scheduling a tour of the attraction.

County Attorney Bill Ring spoke about the federal government having a student loan program; however, because it is so narrow it is not beneficial to a lot of people seeking assistance. He stated the program needs to be amplified. Chairwoman Fowler suggested to Director Peterson that this can be something that is introduced at National Association of Counties (NACo).

County Attorney Bill Ring also spoke about criminal justice reform. He stated there was a wave of interest last year at the state legislature. There have been two Resolutions proposed– one is for the public defenders. He stated part of criminal justice reform is to have robust public defenders and allow justice to be done and that there is also a need for robust probation services.

Deputy County Manager Marie Peoples spoke about the release of inmates convicted on marijuana charges and or the expungement of marijuana offenses. Mr. Holmes stated there is an initiative being proposed with expungement provisions in it.

Supervisor Elizabeth Archuleta left the meeting at 1:00 p.m.
Supervisor Babbott left at 1:06 pm.

Assessor Armando Ruiz spoke about short term rentals. He stated they are hosting a tax conference and organizing a discussion on short-term vacation rentals. They are having trouble finding people from the industry to attend the conference.

Supervisor Parks left the meeting at 1:07 pm

Chairwoman Fowler adjourned the meeting at 1:08 pm.

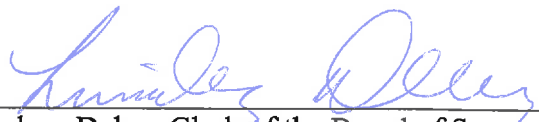
COCONINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS





Lena Fowler, Chair

ATTEST:



Lindsay Daley, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

