

FINAL COPY
Torrance County Board of Commissioners
Regular Commission Meeting
April 10, 2024
9:00 AM

Commissioners Present:

RYAN SCHWEBACH – COUNTY CHAIRMAN
SAMUEL SCHROPP – COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Others Present:

JANICE BARELA – MADAM COUNTY MANAGER
TRACY SEDILLO – DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER
MICHAEL GARCIA – COUNTY ATTORNEY
LINDA JARAMILLO – COUNTY CLERK
GENELL MORRIS – ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT I
DONALD GOEN – COUNTY P & Z DIRECTOR

1. Call Meeting to order.

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Calls April 10, 2023, Regular Commission Meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

2. Pledge led by: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman

Invocation lead by: Samuel Schropp– County Commissioner

2. Changes to the Agenda:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Public comment will be heard after agenda item 12.

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: Move agenda item 12G to after item 6 due to ISO rating inspections today at 9 am. Move Agenda item 14A—executive

session to before item 12, due to Commissioner McCall's availability to attend via Zoom.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve changes to the agenda.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

4. PROCLAMATION:

A. DWI: Proclaiming April as “Alcohol Awareness Month”.

Deanna Lopez-County DWI Program Coordinator: The following proclamation will be read into the record, Torrance County Board of County Commissioners proclaiming.

“April as Alcohol Awareness Month”

WHEREAS, addiction is a major public health concern; and

WHEREAS, over 67,000 people die by drug overdose each year in the United States, New Mexico is at the 11th highest drug overdose death rate in the United States in 2020; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, 1,878 New Mexicans died from excessive alcohol-related causes, and of those 112 involved alcohol poisoning; and

WHEREAS, alcohol abuse costs the State of New Mexico more than \$2 billion a year; with around 2 million people in the State of New Mexico, it adds up to more than \$1,000 in costs per New Mexican each year; and

WHEREAS, 16.7% of adults in New Mexico report binge drinking, which is four to five drinks for women and five or more for men on one occasion in the past 30

days; New Mexico has a high percentage of heavy drinkers with eight or more drinks per week for women and 15 or more for men; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has the highest alcohol-related death rate in the United States; New Mexico sits at 86.6 deaths per 100,000 people, compared to 41.5 nationally in 2020; alcohol kills New Mexicans at a higher rate than anywhere in the United States and the statistic has not changed since 1997; and

WHEREAS, in New Mexico Department of Health Study shows alcohol abuse killed more than 1,800 New Mexicans under age 65, in 2020, which means more people died from alcohol abuse than from COVID in the first year of the pandemic; one in five New Mexicans died every day from alcohol use; and

WHEREAS, a state Department of Health study estimated in 2018, the latest year for which figures are available that 101,012 New Mexicans were living with an alcohol abuse disorder, with 73,178 unable to get treatment mostly due to cost; and

WHEREAS, the risk of adverse outcomes, such as overdose death and addiction, increases from combined use of drugs and alcohol; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico ranks as one of the weakest states regarding alcohol policy safeguards; it was among the states that had the least amount of improvement since the early 1990s; and

WHEREAS, strong alcohol policy safeguards, such as limiting where, when, and how alcohol is sold, in addition to preserving government oversight of alcohol sales, can contribute to lower excessive drinking rates among New Mexicans and can help to reduce alcohol-involved drug overdoses; and

WHEREAS, we resolved as a community to continue to support those struggling with substance use disorders, that they enter into and participate in treatment; we further support strong alcohol policy safeguards to encourage recovery.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the members of the Board of County Commissioners of Torrance County, New Mexico, do hereby proclaim the month of April, as ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH in Torrance County and call this observance to the attention of our citizens. Signed and sealed in the Torrance County seat, Estancia, New Mexico on April 10, 2024.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to make April Alcohol Awareness Month.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Samuel Schropp – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: -Absent:
MOTION CARRIED

5. CERTIFICATES AND AWARDS: None

A. MANAGER: Employee of the 4th Quarter 2023 – Deputy Ronald Saavedra

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: I have the honor of awarding our employee of the quarter award to Deputy Ron Saavedra. This is an award that the Commission approved for the county to make quarterly. The nominations come from the staff. The county administration then selects who the employee of the quarter is. It's somebody who's gone above and beyond their regular duties for the past quarter. This individual will also be granted an additional day off during the next quarter. Deputy Saavedra is this quarter's recipient, he stepped up when a vacancy occurred and took on the effective charge of the Court Services section and also the sex offender registration. On top of that, he also does training for the department. He does his law enforcement duties with excellence and compassion under extenuating circumstances. Law enforcement goes out into our community and is tasked with doing some difficult things as far as serving papers when people are in distress already. Deputy Saavedra has proven over and over again that he is a professional, he cares about the community and each individual's circumstances. He does this work daily in such a way that brings a lot of pride to the Torrance County Sheriff's Office but also to Torrance County.

Cheryl Allen - Executive Assistant for the Sheriff's Office: I have witnessed Deputy Saavedra going above and beyond to help residents of Torrance County. One time someone came in and had a court order he didn't understand, Deputy Saavedra sat down with him and went through it line by line and explained the entire court order to him. Another time there was a woman who was very upset

about everything that was going on. Again, Deputy Saavedra sat there and explained everything to her until she understood and was calmed down. I just want to commend him for that.

David Frazee-County Sheriff: I have seen over and over; that he takes pride in his job. He had to evict the man not long ago, from his trailer. Deputy Saavedra brought the man in, sat down in the office, and talked to him. I was impressed with the compassion that he showed and how much effort he put into trying to get this man, some other place to stay. He stayed with it until the problem was solved. That's the kind of Deputy that I want working for me. That's the kind of Deputy Torrance County needs.

Deputy Ron Saavedra: I was raised in Torreon and left for Albuquerque. I've been in law enforcement for 30 years and came back home. Finishing up my time here, I'm going to retire here. I feel connected with the folks here in Torrance County. I have a lot of family here as well. I want to do my best to serve the community. I appreciate this award. I am going to continue doing my job as long as I can.

***12G.FIRE:** Requesting submission of the FY25 Fire Protection Fund application and authorizing County Manager Janice Y. Barela to be the authorized electronic signatory. Application is due to the State Fire Marshals Office by April 30, 2024.

Hanna Sanchez – Deputy County Fire Chief: I am requesting permission to apply for FY 25 Fire Protection funds. We apply for this annually in our operating budgets for districts one through six. This is money that is awarded to us by the State Marshal's Office, depending on our ISO. Currently, we're going through ISO Inspections today for districts two and three to drop our points and bring in more funding to those districts. I also request that County Manager Janice Barela be the Authorized signatory on our behalf.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve submission of the FY25 Fire Protection Fund application and authorizing County Manager Janice Y. Barela to be the authorized electronic signatory.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

6. BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: None

7. PUBLIC COMMENT and COMMUNICATIONS:

*heard after agenda item 12

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. COMMISSION: Request approval of minutes for March 27, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve the minutes for the March 27, 2024, regular Board of County Commissioners meeting.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner:

Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

9. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

A. FINANCE & PURCHASING: Request approval of payables.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve payables.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

10. ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE/AMENDMENT TO COUNTY CODE:

None

11. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION:

- A. CLERK:** Requesting approval of Resolution 2024-15, Resolution Superseding Resolution 2023-21, Designating Polling Places and Locations for All Regular Local and Statewide Elections Conducted in 2023 and 2024. (Moving McIntosh location from Radio Station to Senior Center.)

Linda Jaramillo-County Clerk: McIntosh’s polling location needs to be moved to the McIntosh Senior Center located at 16 Willow Lake, McIntosh, New Mexico. This is due to the current location not being in use and has no utilities. We will have many signs to direct the public to the correct location. All locations are listed on our website.

The polling locations are at the Estancia High School gym, Dr. Saul Community Center in Mountainair, Torreon Community Center, Willard Community Center, Duran Fire Station, Encino Community Center, McIntosh Senior Center, Moriarty Civic Center, Moriarty/Edgewood Administrative Office, Manzano Community Center, Tajique Community Center. Early voting will be here at our building, which begins May 7th. I encourage anyone who is going to vote absentee by mail to ask now because it’s a short time to send out ballots. We do not want your ballot to be delayed in the mail.

I see that there are many kids here today. I want to encourage you all to vote. If you're 18, you can come to my office and register to vote, just like your voices are being heard today, your voices can be heard when you vote.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve Resolution 2024-15.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

B. FINANCE & PURCHASING: Requesting approval of Resolution 2024-16, Disposition of Torrance County Property, Superseding Resolution 2024-06.

Misty Witt-County Finance Director: This resolution supersedes the prior one. We added Schedule A to the resolution, outlining where which assets are going to be put up for disposition. We also made one change. We originally requested that a Ford Ranger be disposed of, we want to keep that one and replace it with a Dodge Ram passenger van. The County Road Shop has use for the Ford Ranger.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve Resolution 2024-16.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Zoom will be offline during the executive session and will resume when we reenter the regular session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A. MANAGER: Acquisition of water rights – Closed pursuant to NMSA 1978 § 10-15- 1(H)(8)

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to move into executive session.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

9:22 AM

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to move into regular session.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

10:26 AM

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Discussion on Acquisition of water rights – Closed pursuant to NMSA 1978 § 10-15- 1(H)(8) **No Action Taken**

12. APPROVAL

- A. MANAGER:** Request approval and award of the Duran Water System Improvement Project to File Construction, LLC (RFP: SAP-20-E2241-STB) as well as the identification of County funds for the project. (Bohannon-Huston)

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: We have Andrew Swartswalter here from Bohannon-Huston he is a project manager, and he has been assisting us as a lead in this project.

Andrew Swartswalter - Bohannan Houston: We had a project that was bid on and advertised on February 4. The bid opening was conducted on February 28, for the Duran water system improvement including the demolition of an existing out-of-use storage tank and building. A new 20,000-gallon storage tank will serve Duran. We had one bidder on the project, which was File Construction. Their bid came in at \$561,000. We have submitted a recommendation for an award to County Manager Barela. We recommend that we award the project. It's challenging to get contractors interested in some of the smaller projects out here. I think we are excited that we did at least receive one bid on this.

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: The environmental department has been approving step by step, everything that the county and Bohannan-Houston have done in preparation to have this completed. Part of that process includes reviewing the contract that we have awarding this bid. They would not approve this unless they were able to make sure that the county has identified the funds that we're going to use to pay for it. All the rest of the improvements that have been made so far have been funded by appropriations from the legislature. We no longer have any additional funds appropriated; we've utilized all of those monies. We do have an additional \$100,000 that was appropriated at this last legislative session for the entire water system. It doesn't specifically have to go to this project, it can go to another phase, but that would not be available until the new fiscal year, which begins July 1. Even then an agreement would have to be provided to the county for execution. Then the state would also have to execute on their side, which takes a considerable amount of time. Right now we're asking for the Commission to approve certain funds to take care of completely funding this project. What we've identified as staff is two different options. One is to use PILT money, we have money available. We also can use some of our GRTs with gross receipts tax which has been increased with the construction of the wind farms. The county is at a place where we can fund this, it would just need to have the approval of the Commission.

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Did we set aside some ARPA funds?

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: We did not set aside ARPA funds for this; the ARPA funds were used for projects that were associated with Bohannan. Houston was specifically for the EMWT Regional Water Association. We do have the potential for some funds that were not fully utilized and that were appropriated for the projects that could be utilized for this, but we don't have that completely identified, as far as what's left over, prepared for you today. So there's a potential for ARPA funds. It would be in the best interest to have this award today. It doesn't have to wait, we can put it to the next meeting to get additional information. I do know that we do have the funds available. What we can do is get exact balances for

the PILT money as well as where we are with our GRTs. I do not know if we'll have the ARPA completely ready by the next meeting.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Another option is the interest that's been earned on our reserve. We can draw partially from that and partially from the other two funding sources so that we still retain some flexibility with the PILT and other funding sources.

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: We are not leaving any capital outlay on the table. Currently, we have used the capital outlay, and have closed out those appropriations. We don't have anything pending. We only have the new appropriation that's coming. We can't go back in time to replenish capital outlay appropriation.

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: We are going into a budget cycle. I would like to commit the funds from the easiest line item so that it can be changed back around, depending on what this commission sees within this budget cycle.

Tracy Sedillo-Deputy County Manager: Either of those funds would be fine. We can go forth with a budget adjustment at the next meeting to identify a line item for this project. If we need to move it in the next budget cycle, we can, it's an internal process, because it's all county funds.

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: We will use the PILT fund and then when we get into a full financial discussion, we'll make adjustments as needed.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve and award the Duran Water System Improvement Project to File Construction, LLC (RFP: SAP-20-E2241-STB) and identify County funds for PILT and authorizing Madam County Manager Janice Barela to sign for it.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

B. SHERIFF: Requesting approval to submit Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) application.

Cheryl Allen-County Sheriff Executive Assistant: The deadline to submit this grant is this Friday. We are requesting \$18,514.00 for equipment to provide safety

to our officers. We use \$2,400.00 for confidential funds and \$25,404.00 for overtime, and the total would be \$46,314.00. The overtime is used to conduct investigations and the whole purpose of the work on this grant is to put our Community Service Program into operation which includes investigation portions. The goal is to reduce drugs, violent crimes, and property crimes within the county. If we receive this grant, this would be the fourth year in a row that we received it. The community policing portion of this grant is to provide outreach to the community to garner their support in identifying areas where there might be high areas of crime happening within the county that they would report, in addition, we have deputies going out to community events. In addition to that the salaried staff supports this program by going to community events year-round providing and organizing different events. We are requesting permission to submit this grant application.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) application.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

C. SHERIFF: Requesting ratification of submission of a grant application for the Law Enforcement Protection Fund (LEPF) from the New Mexico Department of Finance- Local Government Division for a total of \$114,500.00.

Cheryl Allen-County Sheriff Executive Assistant: This is ongoing funding from the state. However, it does require us to apply. By the time I was advised that the application was due, we did not have time to bring it before the Commission beforehand. We applied, and it has a base rate of \$95,000 based on the size of our county. We are granted a percentage of money based on how many law enforcement officers we have employed at the time of application, it was 13 at that point, so it was an extra \$19,500.00. It will be \$114,500.00 that we receive from the state. This money is to pay for required training that the officers must complete

each year and it also has a fund that provides the equipment that they need each year.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve ratification of submission of grant application for the Law Enforcement Protection Fund (LEPF) from the New Mexico Department of Finance- Local Government Division for the total of \$114,500.00.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

D. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Requesting approval of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) By-Laws.

Samantha O’Dell-County Emergency Manager: This is a request for approval from the Commission for the updated bylaws for our LEPC, our Local Emergency Planning Committee. The bylaws that we had previously were from 2006. We utilize those as well as some bylaws from other counties. LEPC came up with something that made a little more sense for our county. This also lays out the Executive Committee, the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson, the Emergency Managers, and the Secretary Information Coordinator, the terms of their positions, and then monthly meetings, and how all of that would work.

LEPC is the Local Emergency Planning Committee. In 1986, a federal law was created that requires each county or planning area to have a Local Emergency Planning Committee, there's an oversight of the State Emergency Response Commission. This requires us to have plans together and allow the community to have insight and information regarding any environmental or chemical concerns, specifically relating to hazmat. There are agencies within the county that are required to report hazmat conditions to the state each year based on the amount that they house or potentially can release. All of that information is released to the state on an annual basis. This committee is the local group that oversees and puts together an all-hazards emergency plan. This group consists of county employees

as well as employees from each different of the agencies. The only requirement to be a part of it is to either reside in Torrance County or do business in Torrance County. The object is to enhance the safety of the citizens of Torrance County.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) By-Laws.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

E. FINANCE & PURCHASING: Requesting approval and acceptance of IFB-FY24- 04 for Fire Apparatus Maintenance and Repair contract with New Mexico Apparatus.

Misty Witt-County Finance Director: We put out an invitation for bids for fire apparatus maintenance and repairs. We did have the respondent for the bid go through the bid evaluation committee and legal has also reviewed their contract. We are asking for approval for the New Mexico Apparatus to be approved. We have their set hourly rate in their bid. They are required, for the contract, to provide us with quotes for large repairs and things like that. It allows them to provide the maintenance for the fire apparatus and for the Fire Department fleet, including testing to make sure all these apparatuses are within standards.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve and acceptance of IFB-FY24- 04 for Fire Apparatus Maintenance and Repair contract with New Mexico Apparatus.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

F. FINANCE & PURCHASING: Requesting approval and acceptance of IFB-FY24- 03 for Maintenance and Repair to Sheriff's vehicles and fleet contract with DT Automotive.

Misty Witt-County Finance Director: This is similar to the previous item that was just discussed. This will be for maintenance and repairs for the Sheriff's Department vehicles and then county fleet vehicles. This is for preventive maintenance and repairs that come up. It went through the invitation for bid process and went through the bid evaluation committee and legally reviewed this contract all for detail.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve and accept IFB-FY24-03 for Maintenance and Repair to Sheriff's vehicles and fleet contract with DT Automotive.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

G. FIRE: Requesting submission of the FY25 Fire Protection Fund application and authorizing County Manager Janice Y. Barela to be the authorized electronic signatory. Application is due to the State Fire Marshals Office by April 30, 2024.

*Heard after agenda item 5A.

H. GRANTS/ANIMAL SERVICES: Requesting approval to submit an application to the Carrol Petrie Foundation for The Referred Emergency Animal Care and Help (REACH) and The Spay and Neuter Intact Animals Program in Torrance (SNIPIT) programs, requesting \$25,000 per program for a total of \$50,000.

Amanda Lujan - Grants Administrator: We are requesting approval to apply to the Carrol Petrie Foundation. This program has been very successful. It increased the number of people not only adopting animals but also reclaiming animals.

Danette Langdon-Animal Shelter Director: The SNIPIT program is not only for the general public, but it's also for people to reclaim their animals. If it's an owned animal, it can be run through the SNIPIT program, they only pay for vaccines and the microchip, and sterilization is paid for. The REACH program is our medical program to help with animal emergencies.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve to apply Carrol Petrie Foundation for The Referred Emergency Animal Care and Help (REACH) and The Spay and Neuter Intact Animals Program in Torrance (SNIPIT) programs, requesting \$25,000 per program for a total of \$50,000.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

- I. **GRANTS/CLERK:** Requesting approval to submit the application to the Office of the Secretary of State for improvements to the voting machine storage warehouse, including cameras and security, the total requested amount of \$50,000.

Amanda Lujan - Grants Administrator: The Secretary of State's Office received federal funding. Torrance County was allocated \$50,000. County Clerk Linda Jaramillo and her team have identified areas that need improvement at the warehouse where the voting machines are held in storage. Camera system \$35,000, security lighting \$10,000 and security doors \$5000.

Linda Jaramillo-County Clerk: The first paragraph from the Secretary of State's letter says, Dear County Clerk in the ongoing commitment to ensure the security of New Mexico's election infrastructure. The Office of the Secretary of State is accepting applications from all Counties to obtain funds from the office, through a federal subgrant to address physical and cyber security needs at the county level. The subgrants service provides immediate funding directly to counties to address security gaps identified during the prior annual audit ahead of the Primary Election

in June 2024. The office kindly requests your county's participation by completing the grant, which we did.

We have issues with security. The voting machines do not belong to the county. They belong to the Secretary of State. We house the voting machines here for them, they require that we have security to protect those machines that we are in care of. This will help us increase security by getting cameras, and a secure gate since the road department has moved. That gate is dangerous, part of this grant will fix that gate to where it doesn't fall off the hinges. Cameras in case someone tries to get into our storage unit and mess with our machines.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve the application to the Office of the Secretary of State for improvements to the voting machine storage warehouse, including cameras and security, the total requested amount of \$50,000.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

J. GRANTS/FIRE/EMS: Requesting approval to submit a grant application to FEMA for Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program.

Amanda Lujan - Grants Administrator: This is to apply to FEMA for a federal grant to increase staffing for the fire and EMS program. We are asking for funding for seven Firefighters/EMTs and three Captains. This will increase the fire staff by 10 people. This grant is a five-year term. For three years, the FEMA will pay 100%, then in year four, they'll pay 50%, year five, they'll pay 25%. We have three years to determine how to make that match for year four and year five.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve grant application to FEMA for Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

K. GRANTS/HUMAN RESOURCES: Requesting approval to submit a grant application to the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) for the Summer Enrichment Internship Program for 2024, the total requested amount of \$154,464.00.

Amanda Lujan - Grants Administrator: We are requesting approval to apply for the summer enrichment program. This will be our third or fourth year receiving the grant. We place students from all the different school districts with employers across the county. The State Public Education Department pays their salaries. It pays for anywhere from 30 to 50 students. We are requesting \$154,000. It also pays for a coordinator to manage those students and employers.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve the grant application to the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) for the Summer Enrichment Internship Program for 2024, the total requested amount of \$154,464.00.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

L. MANAGER: Requesting approval of the Restrictive Housing Quarterly Report.

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: Before you is the Restrictive Housing Quarterly Report. You are required to review this quarterly. This is with the Torrance County Detention Facility which houses our County's inmates. This is a

report that identifies any time or reason why an inmate is placed in restrictive housing.

Action Taken:

Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to approve the Restrictive Housing Quarterly Report.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

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

MOTION CARRIED

***PUBLIC COMMENT:**

DWAYNE PARKER- owner of EVWISP: I understand that at the last meeting, they talked about getting internet to the county and I would like to let you be aware that I am available to discuss anything that you might like to talk about. I've been in this business since 1995, I'm good at what I do. I started the Early Bird Wireless EVWISP three years ago, solvent. I have nine towers in this valley. I'd like to put up more in these rural areas that do not have internet.

Sophia Genevieve Wilson - Managing Attorney for the Asylum and Detention Programs at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center. I am here to respectfully ask that the Torrance County Commission elect not to renew the ICE contract with the Torrance County Detention Facility when it expires on May 14 of this year, as a direct services attorney who works with and represents detained asylum seekers at TCDF, I have been able to observe extremely troubling systemic violations there. Men who have been detained at TCDF at completely different times have repeatedly recorded the same dire conditions, inadequate and spoiled food, lack of access to clean drinking water, a failure to render medical attention, including in dire health emergencies, and a complete lack of respect for basic human rights and due process and their asylum cases. I often hear those who support the prison's ICE contract to try and refute these persistent reports of violations. This is incredibly disingenuous to me, because not only have legal services organizations repeatedly documented these violations, but they have also been confirmed by multiple

government oversight bodies and each member of the Congressional Delegation who has spoken directly with people who are detained there.

We are no longer at a point where we can reasonably disagree about what's happening at TCDF with the migrants. The truth is these violations have been known and are well documented. Today, community members will ensure that the testimonies and experiences of people detained at TCDF are included in the County Commission's public record and meaningfully considered. Their experiences at TCDF should be central to the determination of whether to renew the ICE contracts. Torrance County has an incredible opportunity to seriously confront these problems and take a stance by refusing to be complicit in human rights abuses. We take this responsibility seriously. Thank you

Andres Esquivel - Campaign Manager at New Mexico Dream Team: I am going to be reading the testimony from Ricardo Gonzalez who was formerly detained at TCDF. My name is Ricardo Gonzalez. I am a survivor of the Torrance County Detention Facility where I was held for 68 days from December 29, 2023, to March 8, 2024, while seeking asylum from Venezuela. A country where my family and I faced life-threatening danger. My family and I hoped for safety and protection and I ended up in a place devoid of humanity and respect for human rights handcuffed and transported to Torrance from Juarez, Mexico without consent or explanation. I found myself in an environment that contradicted the very essence of asylum and protection. Upon my arrival at Torrance, I was not informed about my case or the procedures that awaited me. The facility rather than offering refuge, subjected me and others to inhumane treatment and deplorable conditions that I feel compelled to expose.

An inmate had a hernia on the side of his stomach, one day he fell to the ground, from the pain. Instead of getting the help that he needed from the guards, the guards ended up kicking him where he had a hernia. Other inmates jumped in to stop the guards. He got worse after the incident and was scared to complain about his pain. Another inmate tried to commit suicide by hanging himself with a cloth because he was denied asylum and had to go back to his country. When the guards got him out, he was already having seizures and was placed in a dark room for days.

The food is measured and the milk is always expired. The leftover food was always thrown away because they preferred to throw the food than give it to the inmates. I worked in the kitchen and would get a little more than the other inmates. Inside the

detention facility guards decided if we got to drink water, many times I would hear them saying no to the inmates which had caused inmates to fight over the water.

Bella Bjornstad - Immigration Law Center: This is a statement from two men who were detained. Our names are Louis Duran Acosta and Douglas Chuck Barris. We fled violence in our home countries to seek safety in the United States. When we arrived on March 20, immigration authorities told us our human rights would be respected. The reality is anything but that.

The clothes we receive at Torrance are used, dirty, and stained. Can you imagine what it is like to be forced to wear dirty underwear? We don't feel clean. Torrance county detention facility is very unsanitary. The toilets clogged often and so we often smell like sewage. We believe in having good hygiene. It is very important for health and it is impossible to have good hygiene here because this place is unsanitary. The water in this facility is poor quality and the guards instruct us not to drink the water out of the faucets in our cell. The guards bring us water in jugs to share amongst the unit but it runs out very fast. It has not been refilled for many hours, sometimes days. We end up drinking water out of the sinks in our cells. There is a sign above it that says not to drink the water. We are so thirsty we have no choice. The food we're given is inadequate. The portions are very small and we're so hungry all the time. The food is not good, but most importantly, we do not receive enough calories. We are all losing weight. Medical care is also bad, sometimes we wait several weeks or months to get appointments for toothaches and physical pain. No one should be locked up here in Torrance.

We are treated poorly. We are deprived of fair hearings. We are not allowed to fairly seek asylum. We are treated like we're not humans and punished for being migrants. We hope that the politicians hear us and listen to our experience. Thank you

Kelly McCloskey Romero - Coordinator of (VIDA) Volunteer for Immigrants in Detention Albuquerque: We the volunteers visited the Torrance County Detention Facility every month for the last 18 months. That means that we have met with hundreds of immigrants in detention at this facility since October of 2022. These experiences and these interactions compel me to urge you not to renew the contract that you have with ICE. On every visit without fail, the men share tragic stories with us. These stories are about the desperate reasons that motivated them to seek asylum in this country and about the hopes they have for

their future. They have a universal human right to seek asylum. The men at the Torrance County Detention Facility are living under abysmal conditions day after day after day. The testimonials that you've already heard, and you're about to hear are 100% consistent with what we hear at every single VIDA visit. It's not just a matter of one or two people that are having bad experiences. This is what it's like to be detained at Torrance. As we attempt to lift their spirits and take their minds off their desperation, their loneliness, and their trauma, they share with us specifics about the injustices of being detained at TCDF. They talk about being cussed at and mistreated by the guards. They don't have access to clean water to drink. They're served substandard and inadequate food. Despite their countless physical and emotional wounds, they are not provided with timely or adequate medical care. Those who do express their feelings and their despair are placed in solitary confinement. These conditions are inhumane and unjust and you can do something about them. These men are living the unlivable. They do not receive explanations or information about their asylum cases. They are completely in the dark about what is happening to them and what the future holds in store for them. Torrance County does not have to be the site of human rights abuses or egregious violations of human dignity, please do not renew the contract. Thank you for listening.

Renee Wolters - Volunteer with New Mexico Immigrant Law Center: Two inmates statements. Our names are Benjamin and Carlos, I am Benjamin from Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico. I'm a trained and experienced electrician, Carlos is a dancer and choreographer, and everyone says that I am very nice and very kind. We are reasonable and respectable people. We want to tell you what it is like to be an immigrant at the Torrance County Detention Facility. The first thing to know is that everything that we experience is based on confusion and lies. When we were on our way here, we were told that we were going to a shelter, and we were shocked to arrive and realize we were in a prison. Since then, we have heard lie after lie. We never know what is going on. They bring us things in English without explaining to us what they say and tell us that we have to sign them. When we ask questions, they tell us that all the answers can be found on a tablet, but they've never explained to us how to use the tablet or where to find the information. Before we did our credible fear interviews, no one talked to us to explain what it was. We did not see lawyers until after our interviews and after we were denied the opportunity to seek asylum.

Another example of the injustices that we experience daily is the situation with the water. They provide one jug for 37-plus people it's not enough. When it runs out, we respectfully ask for more. They say no, saying that they will give us more in the

morning, but then making us wait until midday for water. One day we were eight hours without water. These are only two of the many examples of the mistreatment that we experienced at this detention center. We ask New Mexico not to continue detaining immigrants here.

Isaac Stafford – WINGS program: The WINGS program provides services to immigrants who have survived torture across New Mexico. Today I'm going to share some words from Juan G who is currently detained at the Torrance facility.

My name is Juan G. I have been detained at the Torrance facility for over five months. I came here from Guatemala to flee gang violence and police corruption. I came here seeking safety and asylum but was detained and treated like an animal. The conditions inside Torrance are unsanitary. The sink in my cell is stained and dirty and the drain releases a terrible odor that makes the entire cells stink. The showers frequently break and when they are working the water is often too hot or too cold to bathe. I know that I am supposed to be allowed outside for at least one hour a day, but we are only allowed outside once per week for, at most, one hour. I work in the kitchen from 7 am to 2 pm and in exchange, I'm given \$5 in wages. I feel like it is important and a duty to work but I feel like I'm being robbed by this detention center and corporation. They make so much money and give us pennies for long hours and work that is critical to making the detention center operate. The food we are told to prepare is dirty. The lettuce is rotted or wilted. There are bugs in the beans we receive. I was once burned in the kitchen and I never received bandages or protective gear to continue cooking that shift. I was then forced to take two days off after seeing a doctor and was not paid for the time I had to take off due to my workplace injury. I rely on this income to purchase food in the commissary and call my family. I know many people who refuse to go to the doctor if they are hurt because they cannot afford to miss work. We are treated very badly at Torrance, we do not have any rights. We are not treated with dignity. We just want to live in safety and freedom in the United States and have the opportunity to seek asylum. Instead, we have been punished and discriminated against for being immigrants. Thank you

Ian Philabaum - Director of Legal Organizing Innovation Law Lab:

Innovation Law Lab is a nonprofit organization that has been providing legal services at the Torrance County Detention Facilities since 2019. I'm here to read a statement of a man who is currently detained in the Torrance County Detention Facility.

On Thursday, March 3, 2024, I started to feel a very strong pain in my right testicle in the lower part of my abdomen. I told the guard on duty about my problem. I begged him to call the medics to examine me because I was in so much pain. He responded that he would see what he could do but didn't promise anything and then continued with his normal work routine. He came back to give us food and I decided to stay outside my cell so that he would take me because my body couldn't take any more of the overwhelming pain. I had been asking for help to see a medic for almost five hours because it was an emergency. I was on the floor when my friend asked the guard to call the medic. He responded that he couldn't do anything because his shift was over and that it was now the job of the next guard, and left. My friends saw me writhing on the floor and started to yell for help because I was having convulsions. When the medics came they took me to a room in the detention center. The examination was done there internally. They only gave me sedatives and then returned me to my cell. The morning after that I urinated in my pants because of the pain and I had a high fever. I put in another medical request both on paper and on the tablet so they could see me. Since the guards didn't want to take me, the moment that they opened the door my friends decided they would take me themselves. When I woke up, I was in the clinic at the detention center. I was told that they were going to transport me to a hospital outside the detention center. They did an x-ray and the results were that they found a hernia. The doctor said I was going to need surgery but at a different location. So they were going to send me to a different clinic because they didn't have the necessary equipment to do the operation. I was sent back to the Torrance County Detention Center. Right now, I am asking if you can help me to get an operation because I'm still in pain. Thank you

Denise Rubi - Mountainair resident: On July 17, 2022, I experienced firsthand the inhumane conditions and the Torrance County Detention Center, where I was falsely imprisoned for 24 hours. I have a heart condition that requires medication. My medication was checked in at the prison. With the stress of being unjustly locked up, I began suffering symptoms of a heart attack which are nausea, my left arm going numb, and pressure on my chest. From my first moment experiencing the symptoms, it was about half an hour before I saw a guard come my way to ask for help. Then I had to wait for that guard to get a nurse to see me so she could tell me, I had to wait until morning to take my meds. They were never given to me until I was finally released late in the evening on July 18. While I was in Torrance County Detention, hoping I wouldn't die in there, and become another statistic. I thought about my brother Gene Garcia, who died on July 18, 2014, at Torrance

County Detention five days into his incarceration. He died of a medical condition or so they say, even though he had a cracked skull and other injuries. I know of three other questionable deaths that happened at TCDF.

Once you're behind those bars, you're now just a dollar sign to the CEOs and stockholders of this legal human trafficking system. Billionaires of these privatized prisons can afford to lose a dime treating people humanely.

Commissioners, I ask that you don't renew the contract to keep this facility open and find a more ethical and humane use for it. Thank you.

Leonardo Casteneda - American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico. I'm here to urge you not to renew the contract for immigrant detention at this facility. In the past five years, Tarrant County has become nationally and internationally known as a site of horrendous conditions where young people from all over the world have come to suffer and even die. That has been a horrible reflection on all of us as a state. It's all because companies like Core Civic based out of state come in and do not care about the well-being of folks in our community, and do not care about the reputation of Tarrant, or New Mexico. They care about the \$2 million a month that they get from the federal government, and then they'll disappear once that money goes away, or once the reputation gets too bad. I urge you to prioritize what the people in your community want. Thank you.

Jackie Neel: I'm here today to read a letter from Helen who is currently in Tarrant. I am a member of (VIDA) Volunteers for Immigrants in Detention. I write letters to asylum seekers and also visit Tarrant fairly frequently and can validate the pain and anguish of these asylum seekers and the messages that they give us about the treatment.

Good morning, my name is Calvin. I'm from Guatemala I have been in for four months. I've seen many problems here and do not think immigrants should be detained here. I work every day in the kitchen. The food is delivered, including beans that have worms in it. We are not allowed to give adequate portions of food but we always end up throwing food away. I know many people are hungry because they do not get enough food. The food quality is not good. Despite our best efforts to make the most of what we have to serve. I've been threatened by guards for no reason. The treatment is very bad and very racist. The medical attention is bad it takes a long time to ever get a response to a request for help.

When you finally do see a doctor they only give you an ibuprofen. Once when cleaning the kitchen some acid filled my eyes. I washed it and asked for help because my eye was hurting. It has been 20 days and I still haven't seen a doctor. I think this place is dangerous. The guards ignore us, and the ones who speak Spanish pretend they don't. There are no rights here.

Zoe Bowman – Attorney with Las Americas Advocacy Center. I urge you to not renew the contract in May. This past year I've partnered with a group of law students from the University of New York who have been providing remote legal consultation and representation for asylum seekers detained at the Torrance County Detention Facility. They're not able to be here today, but I wanted to share a statement from one of these students about what they have learned working almost daily with asylum seekers in Torrance over the past eight months.

Being legal advocates at Torrance County Detention Facility means bearing witness to the steady decline of our clients both physically and mentally, week after week while being completely unable to alleviate procedural delays or improve conditions. This is because due process did not exist at Torrance. Core Civic's persistent refusal to provide confidential meeting spaces for asylum seekers continues up to today. Moreover, understaffing at ICE, the asylum office, and Core Civic have led to widespread procedural delays at every stage of the expedited removal process. The refusal to address these due process concerns demonstrates that the ICE field office and Core Civic are incapable of operating the Torrance County Detention Facility in a way that complies with the intent of expedited removal. Additionally, individuals held in detention at Torrance persistently report inefficient health care, psychological abuse, racist retaliation by guards, labor exploitation, and violations of due process. More than one client has told us they don't know how they'll make it through the day, or if they'll be able to make it until next week's meeting. A psychologist evaluated one of our clients. The evaluator stated in his letter of support, that it is my medical opinion that if the client were to stay in Torrance, he could further decompensate due to lack of appropriate mental health services leading to severe suffering or even death by suicide. Thank you.

Jessica Martinez - Policy Director at New Mexico Immigrant Law Center: The following is an anonymous letter from a current detainee in Torrance.

The conditions here in Torrance are terrible. They prefer to throw away food instead of serving a little more on the plate as if to force us to buy food at the

commissary to make more money off of us. The portions are very small, the meat is artificial and all the food is either already spoiled or expired. There are worms in the food. I have extreme pain in my reproductive parts and need surgery. I was given painkillers but the doctor said that I needed surgery. Instead of surgery, immigration tells me that what I'm feeling is not an emergency and that they cannot help me. I felt like my insides were going to explode. I asked for help. Instead of receiving help, I was told to write a request for medical assistance. I am 19 years old and escaped violence in Colombia. I feel like I'm being punished for being a migrant. We are mistreated by the workers, the nurses, and immigration officials. Torrance should not be allowed to detain immigrants. We are treated very badly. Thank you.

Alejandra Rodriguez - Senior Doctor based on the detention team at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center: Today I'm reading a statement from a man currently detained at the Torrance Detention Center. My name is Victor Rodriguez, I am from El Salvador. I left my country to flee threats and mistreatment from a group of people who have connections with the government and the police. My family has been threatened with revealing my location in my country. I was kidnapped and my cheek was cut off. My daughters are hiding to protect them. During my trip to the United States, I was kidnapped in Mexico, where they forced me to pay to be released. I had to give them 1000 Mexican pesos. It took me two months to reach the border. I spent two days in border patrol tents and then went to ICE custody. At the Torrance County Detention Center, we are only allowed to go out in the sun every four days for 30 minutes. Our breakfast is always the same with no fruits and not enough water for everyone. It is very difficult to get toilet paper, we have to beg the officers to provide it to us. The officer verbally insults us and discriminates against us avoiding any approach. Additionally, Spanish-speaking officers refuse to communicate with us. The medical service we receive is poor, they only give us pills for any discomfort. They do not provide us with Spanish translation translators, nor do they give us time to talk. The documents they asked us to sign are not translated into Spanish and force us to sign without understanding what we are accepting. We've been working in the kitchen for a week and we still haven't been paid. The cell intercom does not work leaving us without communication in case of an emergency. The officers lock us in our cells and are gone for many hours. Thank you

Isa Pena - Director of Strategy and a member of the immigrant community who works for Innovation Law Lab: For the past couple of years the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General called for an end to the ICE detention at TCDF. Our staff has met in person and spoken remotely with hundreds of people detained here in Torrance County Core Civic has made countless attempts to make it appear all as well and good inside at TCDF. When in reality, the voices of the people inside say something completely different. My colleagues speak with people detained at ICE here in Estancia just 3.2 miles from where we are today, every day. In our conversations, all it takes is letting them know that we are not with the government, that we are not with Core Civic, and that we can inform them of their legal rights and they tend to open up about the shock of all the harms that they endure inside. While many are sharing individual stories directly from the inside, I will share things that we commonly hear. Leaking infrastructure leads to human waste backups, fungus, slip and fall injuries, lack of effective laundry leads to dirty clothes and rashes, terrifying and painful delays, and medical attention leading to injury. Fear that if they express mental health problems, they will be locked in solitary, severely lacking potable water, being compelled to work for few dollars a day to spend on commissary just to get badly needed and overpriced food. Being denied daily recreation time due to lack of staff, one or two-hour-long lock-ups, and small cells for counting four times a day. All of these emphasize what people detained at TCDF have independently offered. They are killing us psychologically. We urge you to end the contract.

Jovanny Sebastian Hernandez - New Mexico Dream Team: I'm here to read the statements from two men one from Guatemala and the other from Columbia detained at the Torrance County Detention Center. We are both here in the Torrance County Detention Facility full of anxiety, suffering, worry, and pain. We both have wives who are eight months pregnant and are waiting to become fathers for the first time. Both of our wives are separated from us at the border and are anxiously awaiting a release. They have high blood pressure and a lot of stress. We all went through horrible atrocities in our home countries and on the way here. Now we are here in this detention center, dealing with daily disrespect, a complete lack of hygiene, and dying to get out and be with our pregnant wives. The hygiene situation here is unbelievable. They give us used underwear and we have no idea where it came from or who has already worn it. We got fungus on our feet because everything was so unclean. We feel so confused about what is happening and what our prospects are there for the future. They give us information in English and we have no idea what it says. We are treated so badly here and feel discriminated against. We do not believe people should be detained here. Thank you.

Linda Jaramillo – County Clerk: We will be certifying our voting machines on April 23rd at 9 AM and we will continue until all the machines are certified. We notified all the candidates and it's open to the public. I want to invite everyone to come and watch the process, so you can see exactly how we certify machines. We have also started hands-on training for all our precinct workers in our early voting room.

James Grande Johnson: Morning, Your Majesties. Morning, fellow subjects. So I go by Grande Johnson. I come before you today to pray for your help. You see a few weeks ago some were not so chill. A lady stood up here and tried to tell you that we're using too much water on marijuana crops in the Estancia Valley. I wanted to come up here and argue today that maybe, just maybe, we're not using enough water on marijuana crops in this valley. Now hear me out, the reason I'm able to stand before you today completely stoned out of my mind is because of the doobie I smoked before I came in here that was rolled with that thing, Estancia Valley's sticky icky, because I'm stoned out of my mind. I'm totally chill. I don't even want to throw hands with the code enforcement guys right now. Before you judge me just understand that code enforcement guys are not chill. Other than code enforcement though, Torrance County is a pretty chill place and a prison. I guess that's not very chill either, but no enforcement and a prison. Torrance County is a pretty chill place to chill. I think the water used on marijuana has a direct effect on the generally chilled vibes in this area. It wasn't always like this, people in this valley used to drink alcohol to chill. Here's a chilling fact, alcohol is not chill. As a matter of fact, alcohol is the number one cause of alcohol-related deaths and injuries since Christopher Columbus arrived in the Estancia Valley on the Mayflower. You're probably thinking what, the Mayflower in Estancia, New Mexico. No way. Google it. It's a real thing. Forgot what I was here to talk about anyway, but thank you, Your Majesty, for letting me be with you today.

Tracie Gallegos – CFO/Administrator Village of Encino: I address you today with a concern that we have in the village that I hope doesn't become a concern for the rest of Torrance County in any way. Our municipality began purchasing water for residential usage in 1938 after incorporation. Considered a paying customer we supply the town and Vaughn with the largest most constant usages of the Vaughn water system. Recently we have been in discussions with the Town of Vaughn for continued assurance that our water supply will not be disrupted. Last evening, we

hosted the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem of Vaughn in our council meeting to discuss this further. Needless to say, the discussion to protect this precious life source for the residents of our village is still under negotiation and questionable at this point. I urge you to take what is going on with the Village of Encino and the Town of Vaughn into consideration before taking action with the Town of Vaughn and the Duran water system and study the impact this may cause not just our village but the community of Duran and the many landowners to whom this water source is a significant part of their livelihood. Again, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak.

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: We will be reaching out to further understand this issue.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: I'd like to add my voice to the public comments. Thank you all for your comments. I respect your humanity and admire your path. I'm the guy who has access to the prison and is doing the random walkthrough inspection. I'm the guy who was at the prison at 9 am on Christmas Day, and 8 am on Labor Day Monday, we went to the prison during the 100-degree temperatures last summer and bitterly cold days this winter to ensure that HVAC systems were working and the temperatures in the facility were reasonably comfortable. I am the guy who walks through the prison talking with staff and detainees checking food service and sanitation. I am the guy who is called when there are reports of no running water in the prison. On that day I dropped everything and went to the prison to ensure that there was water for drinking and sanitation. There was no interruption in water service on that day. I am the guy who made an appointment with the warden and reviewed the records about allegations of assault on two asylum seekers.

Our home is where I've talked, on more than one occasion, with Ian Philabaum and Mr. Prado regarding conditions in the prison and the system in place to screen asylum seekers. I am the guy who has seen men with tattoos denoting gang affiliation, and flashing signs of those affiliations as I walked past. I've been into the prison with Miss Bowman on an ICE tour. Mr. Prado, Mr. Philabaum, and Mr. Castaneda have helped me with a family who was living in our home interpreting until my Spanish caught up enough that we could handle things in-house.

Ann and I had a Venezuelan family living in our home for over three months as a family member who worked through the asylum process. That was a very intensive language program. I attended a virtual asylum hearing with the asylum seeker in my office on my computer. The mental health evaluation of one of your clients was printed on my printer, and I helped the asylum seeker translate it into English. I heard in detail first-hand accounts of the hardships that the family endured in their

home country and there in their journey to the US and through the immigration system, including time spent in the El Paso Detention Center. The five-year-old daughter still had emotional problems. Because of that, I've heard their firsthand accounts at length in my home in the evenings as we spoke of the conditions in the Torrance County Detention Facility.

That physical conditions in a facility meet the standards set out by DHS and ICE. The facility is clean, orderly, and reasonably safe. On my last visit, I spoke with a man who had been processed into the facility 14 hours before the time of my visit. By this point, my Spanish had improved enough to have some good conversations. They were malnourished, exhausted from the idea of coming to the ordeal of coming to the US, and frustrated and confused by being detained rather than released into the US. They are being held in prison without being charged or convicted of a crime in the US. They have no reasonable expectation of when their asylum claim will be heard or how that system will work. This is the inhumanity of the process, not the physical conditions in the prison.

DHS, ICE, and Core Civic are following the law and the policies mandated by Congress. The inhumanity of being held against their will without charge or conviction is a problem of federal policy, not a problem with Core Civic or its staff at the Torrance County Detention Facility. I add my voice to yours in protest, not against Core Civic or the physical conditions at the facility, but rather where the blame for the faults and inequities of the Congress of the United States. I urge you all to use your humanity and passion to pressure Congress to pass the bipartisan Senate Bill negotiated by Senators Lankford, Gillibrand, and Murthy. Detaining some asylum seekers for further vetting is, in my opinion, based on firsthand knowledge necessary to national security, fully funding and staffing the immigration system is the humane course of action, so that asylum seekers can have a speedy and fair hearing of their claims and will know where their future lies.

13. DISCUSSION

A. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Department update regarding items that are in progress.

Samantha O'Dell-County Emergency Manager: The Local Emergency Planning Committee bylaws are now approved and will be submitted to the State Emergency Response Commission for approval. Next, we have an Executive Committee that meets quarterly and has been elected and their information has been submitted to the State Emergency Response Commission as well for approval. We will receive that information once they have their next meeting to approve those members. The Executive Committee consists of Chair Stephen Garrett, Vice Chair Todd Brogowski, Secretary Cheryl Allen, Information Coordinator Tracey Master, and the Emergency Manager also required to be part of the Executive Committee. We are meeting on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 9 am here in the commission chambers.

Our Community Wildfire Protection Plan is currently in progress. We have had two core team meetings. The third meeting was expected to be in April, but it will be in May, and we planned on having a public meeting in May but that will be pushed out to June. Once the dates are set, we will post information for the public if anyone is interested in hearing about the Community Wildfire Protection Plan that's been updated.

We have an Emergency Management Volunteer Group that is being renamed to Emergency Resource Partners of Torrance County that meets monthly. We are going to be holding shelter training in April, working on keeping those individuals up to speed so that if we have to open an emergency shelter, we have the personnel that can assist with setting that up. We are participating in a resource group that meets quarterly with individuals or agencies that bring information and resources available within the community. Something that I found is when we have, for example, a structure fire and I respond and get Red Cross assistance started for those individuals. I'm also telling them what information and resources are available, but I'm not providing them with any documentation. I'm working on putting together some folders that can be left with those individuals so they know where they can go and get food, clothing, pet food, or whatever resources they need.

On March 15, a storm damaged the radio tower. Since then there's been a handful of people that have been working to try to get those resources put back together. Some of our challenges were the road was impassable. The Road Department had to get up there and work on the road before anybody else could get up there to get the other items that were needed. During the storm five or six power poles were

taken down, and no electricity was available out there. Everything was put on the backup generator; the backup generator ran out of fuel. We were unable to get the propane truck up there due to the roads. Ben from our Dispatch, Valencia County, and Code Three who is the contractor that works with Valencia County were taking fuel up to the generator daily or sometimes twice a day to ensure that the power was there that was needed. The biggest issue that we have right now is the antenna is still broken. It is creating some issues with radio communication, some communications are not getting through, and some of the communications that are getting through are all static. As of today, they are supposed to be up there replacing that antenna. We hope that by this evening, radio communications will be almost back to normal. There's some concern that it will be in the same condition it was before the storm. Ben is working with Motorola and with Code Three who is replacing that antenna to make sure we get everything troubleshot so that we have the radio communications that we need for the county and our first responder's cell information. Thank you.

B. MANAGER'S REPORT:

Janice Barela-Madam County Manager: I met with Senator Ben Ray Lujan last week, along with some of his staff. He wanted to visit with us about any concerns and possible projects that the county has, and that he can assist with, including what projects we would like to submit to his office for funding for the congressionally directed spending. It was a meeting that lasted a little over an hour with him. He was very attentive throughout the entire time that we spoke and cared about all the issues that we brought up. We did bring up the Detention Facility and the ICE contract. Commissioner Schropp did a great job of giving the county's perspective on how this is a federal issue. I appreciate what you said to the Senator.

We reviewed most of the projects on our list, which were public safety related, those were items that he appreciated greatly. We're talking about combined funding between Congresswoman Melanie Stansbury's office and Senator Ben Ray Lujan's office to fund the new Fire Station possibly fully, along with USDA being an agency that's identified for additional funding if needed.

I felt this was a great visit. I was very pleased that the Senator reached out and wanted to meet with us. During the time that I've been with Torrance County last

15 years, I do not remember a time in his tenure that he has been out in Torrance County specifically to talk to us. I know that he also met with the Town of Estancia. It was great to see that he made an effort to reach out to those other local governments.

We will be advertising soon for the Director of the 911 Dispatch Center. We did receive a letter of resignation from our Facilities Director, we will be advertising that as well.

C. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

- 1) Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman, District 1

Kevin McCall-County Vice Chair: Absent

- 2) Ryan Schwebach - County Chairman, District 2

Ryan Schwebach-County Chairman: State FFA CDEs happened last week. Within the valley, we have three districts that participate in Moriarty, Estancia, and Mountainair. All of them did very well. Estancia has two Agronomies that achieved first place in the state, they will compete nationally. Mountainair took Forestry and multiple awards from the individuals and teams on placings. If you guys haven't been there, they announced the top five of a team and an individual, they then brought them up on stage in the Pan Am Center. Quite often, these kids have never been on a stage. It's a little nerve-racking. To watch these kids get up there and honestly achieve something that they have worked hard for is truly inspiring. If you see a kid in a blue jacket, be sure and congratulate them and wish them well.

3) Samuel Schropp – County Commissioner, District 3

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: During a meeting with Senator Ben Ray Lujan, the Senator said the new 700 system would interface with the internet. As fiber optics comes online, as part of the project that will be running from Mountainair to Tijeras, it is going to pick up and help with a lot of these problems that we've seen.

I want to commend the County Manager and the Deputy County Manager; they had compiled numbers that were brought to the Senator's attention. The economic impact that closing the prison would have on the community as well as the human cost. We also spoke then about the humanitarian cost of prison as I related earlier.

Last night I attended a Fair Board meeting that was well attended, and all of the stakeholders were well represented, heard, and very respectful. I enjoyed it. I came away with a couple of questions that I need information on so that I can bring answers to the Board and the participants at the next meeting. How is the planning process for the construction of the multi-use building progressing? Is it on track for the multi-use building to be completed for the 2025 fair? There'll be some progress reports as we go along. Regarding the \$41,000 committed to the improvements to the current exhibition, I would refer this question to Commissioner McCall and his construction project expertise to keep from getting too many hands in the project. A complete list, as well as some guidance on this from the Commission to proceed with the plan repairs renovation. The Fair Board plans on a groundbreaking ceremony after this year's fair. The Board would like the Commission to participate and provide the architectural concept drawings for display at the fair for the groundbreaking ceremony. A proclamation from the Commission would be a nice touch as well.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A. MANAGER: Acquisition of water rights – Closed pursuant to NMSA 1978 § 10-15- 1(H)(8)

*Held before agenda item 12.

15. **Announcement of the next Board of County Commissioners Meeting:**
April 24, 2024, at 9:00 AM

16. **Signing of Official Documents.**

17. **Adjourn.**

Action Taken:

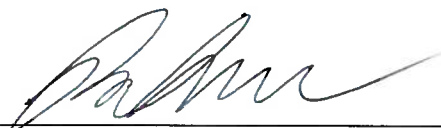
Ryan Schwebach – County Chairman: Motion to adjourn.

Samuel Schropp-County Commissioner: Seconds the motion.

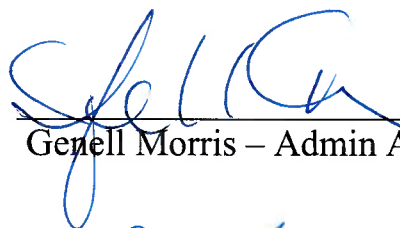
Roll Call Vote: Samuel Schropp – County Commissioner: - Yes: Ryan Schwebach
– County Chairman: – Yes: Kevin McCall – County Vice Chairman: -Absent:

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 11:57 AM



Ryan Schwebach - Chairman



Genell Morris – Admin Assistant



Date



Linda Jaramillo – County Clerk

The Video of this meeting can be viewed in its entirety on the
Torrance County NM website. (torrancecountynm.org)