

The Board met in a Regular Meeting at the Santa Cruz County Complex, 2150 N. Congress Drive, Room #120, Nogales, AZ. Present: Rudy Molera, Chairman; John Fanning, Vice-Chairman; Luis Carlos Davis, Member; Jesus Valdez, County Manager; Mauricio Chavez, Deputy County Manager; Robert May, Civil Bureau Chief; Alma Schultz, Clerk of the Board.

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Molera called the meeting to order, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, led by Maria Martinez.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Supervisor Davis made a motion to adopt the Agenda and deviate from the Agenda sequence as necessary; seconded by Vice-Chairman Fanning; motion carried unanimously. (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Alejandro Castaneda, a resident of Rio Rico, spoke on behalf of Lake Patagonia Ranch regarding disagreements with School District #28 taxes.

CURRENT EVENTS

1. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISOR DAVIS: met with Gerardo Valenzuela Buelna, a representative of the Government of Sonora, and the County Manager to establish a binational collaboration; participated in the Council on Aging Thanksgiving Celebration; attended a meeting with Senator Gabaldón and School Superintendent Donnelly focusing on school opportunities and challenges; briefly met with Congressional representative Adelita Grijalva, who will be sworn in at Nogales High School on December 5th at 5:00 PM; attended the 4th Annual United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) event focused on trade and marketing relationships; took part in the Small County Forum hosted by Navajo County; and attended the monthly CSA Board of Directors meeting.

VICE-CHAIRMAN FANNING: Expressed congratulations to the Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District #35, recognizing Superintendent David Verdugo for being named the 2026 Arizona Superintendent of the Year by the Arizona School Administrators Association, and Lourdes Vasquez for receiving the Outstanding Governing Board Member Award; he served as an announcer at the Calabasas Middle School Spelling Bee; participated in the Christmas Tree Lighting event with the Rio Rico Rotary at Garretts, with special thanks to Sheriff Castillo and UniSource, Ray Bermudez for lighting the tree; collaborated with the school district and Garretts to raise \$6,000–\$7,000 in funding to support those in need within SCVUSD #35; extended thanks to students for their involvement with Animal Control; and congratulated Sonoita Rodeo, which was officially named "Rodeo of the Year" following its successful 110th event in September 2025 by the Grand Canyon Pro Rodeo Association.

CHAIRMAN MOLERA: attended the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) meeting alongside Supervisor Davis and the County Manager, which he found very informative; participated in the CSA Board meeting during a busy and productive two-day period; mentioned and welcomed the visit from Congressional representative Adelita Grijalva, who will be sworn on this Friday at Nogales High School at 5:00 PM; had the privilege of attending a basketball game at Rio Rico High School; thanked Alma for spearheading the Christmas Tree Lighting event for county employees; and spoke with Vice-Chairman Fanning, wishing him a speedy recovery ahead of his upcoming surgery.

2. MANAGER

JESUS VALDEZ, COUNTY MANAGER, no report.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. FINANCE: CASH & INVESTMENTS, EXPENDITURES & REVENUE REPORTS

Mauricio Chavez, Deputy County Manager, reported \$22,401,55.22 in the General Fund, of which \$16,559,123.27 is invested; \$5,654,243.28 in the Road Fund, of which \$5,121,796.64 is invested; \$3,272,438.91 in the Flood Control District Fund, of which \$308,676.83 is invested; \$6,472,011.35 in the Jail District Fund, of which \$4,399,423.13 is invested; \$62,103,183.7 total for all funds, of which \$28,509,646.05 is invested; \$9,504,506.01 estimated end of month balance, compared to \$12,108,182.21 cash at December 2024, a difference of \$(2,603,676.20).

3. DEPARTMENT(S) UPDATE

Alejandro Paz, County Treasurer, provided an update regarding the rebilling process for taxpayers in School District #28, noting that checks will be mailed to those who overpaid. He also reported progress on the county's bank transition, stating that the full transition will be completed with PNZ Bank by the end of the month. The only remaining items will be outstanding checks with Chase Bank.

Maya Donnelly, School Superintendent, expressed her gratitude for the facility's agreement that has supported the use of the 1904 Courthouse, allowing for the expansion of numerous community events without concern. Armando Moreno shared his concern about declining funding for his free art classes, which serve many community members. The C-CREO Hub continues to offer services that prepare students for post-secondary education. The Literacy Bus has been active throughout town and has been invited to many community events, especially during the holiday season. A flyer with additional information was distributed, and a cleanup event for kids is scheduled for Sunday morning following the parade.

J. Leonard Fontes Jr., Public Works Director, provided an update on several ongoing projects along I-19. He reported progress on the corridor from I-19 to Ruby Road and Rio Rico Road, including work on both the east and west frontage roads. The department is currently working on environmental clearances and is nearing completion of the extension of the west frontage road up to Calle Caralampi and onto Rio Rico Drive. Additionally, there have been a couple of submittals for proposed developments, one at the northwest corner of Ruby Road and West Frontage Road, and another adjacent to the Chevron station. Meetings are being held with developers to discuss county requirements, as well as with the railroad regarding easements and bridge alignment adjustments. Mr. Fontes also reported progress on the Babocomari Creek Elgin Bridge project, which includes verification of the bridge's historical significance. Regarding the SR83 Drive to Lower Elgin project, ADOT and the contractor have completed testing and plan to begin work on January 12. Furthermore, aerial mapping for flood control has been completed, and the boundary survey is nearing completion, along with other related updates.

STUDY SESSION

1. PLANTING THE FUTURE, URBAN FORESTRY AND COMMUNITY DESIGN IN RIO RICO BY BO YANG, PHD, PLA, FASLA, AICP PROFESSOR AND STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA (REQ: COUNTY MANAGER)

Bo Yang, PhD, PLA, FASLA, AICP Professor and Students of the University of Arizona presented the *Walking Rio Rico: A Path for Community & Culture* project remotely. The initiative proposes planting

250–350 drought-tolerant trees along the west frontage road in Rio Rico to create shaded pedestrian corridors, enhance community connectivity, and celebrate Sonoran heritage through native landscaping and public art. The project also integrates green stormwater infrastructure to address erosion, flooding, and urban heat island effects.

2. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PATHWAYS FOR SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BY DR. ENRIQUE DAVIS-MAZLUM, ARIZONA STATE DIRECTOR, UNIDOSUS (REQ: SUPERVISOR DAVIS)

Dr. Enrique Davis Mazlum from UnidosUS presented on the Nogales Home Initiative Pilot Program, a UnidosUS-led effort focused on expanding affordable homeownership, workforce housing, and economic mobility in Nogales and Santa Cruz County. The presentation emphasized the urgent need for 1,000 new homes over the next 4–5 years, addressing gaps in housing for teachers, public employees, and young families.

The Board recognized Dr. Davis Mazlum for his leadership in advancing housing solutions and congratulated him on his recent appointment to the Latino Advisory Board by Governor Katie Hobbs.

3. PRESENTATION OF THE SANTA CRUZ VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA - WHAT IT IS AND WHAT WE DO, BY LESLEY KONTOWICZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (REQ: VICE-CHAIRMAN FANNING)

Lesley Kontowicz from the Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area delivered a comprehensive overview highlighting the region’s national designation, its cultural and ecological significance, and the impact of federal investment and community-driven projects. Since 2020, nearly \$1.9 million in federal funds have supported heritage grants, tourism initiatives, public art, and conservation efforts across Santa Cruz County. The presentation emphasized local stewardship, heritage tourism, and educational outreach, including student field trips and river clean-ups.

Special recognition and appreciation were extended to Lesley Kontowicz and her colleagues for their dedication and impactful work in preserving and promoting the Santa Cruz Valley’s rich heritage and vibrant communities.

Supervisor Davis made a motion to recess General Session and move into Flood Control, seconded by Vice-Chairman Fanning; the motion carried unanimously. (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

FLOOD CONTROL

1. DIRECTOR'S/PROJECT REPORT

Flood Control District Report – November 2025

Allan Sanchez, Floodplain Coordinator, presented the monthly report noting above-average rainfall in Nogales and improved drought conditions across Santa Cruz County. Key updates included progress on the Ephraim Canyon and Patagonia Regional Flood Control Projects, FEMA coordination for Potrero Creek and Nogales Downtown studies, and ordinance review efforts. The report also noted Mr. Sanchez’s appointment to the Town of Patagonia Flood and Flow Committee, approved by the Town Council at their November 19th special meeting.

2. MONTHLY REPORT FROM CITY OF NOGALES

No Report.

3. MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE TOWN OF PATAGONIA

within report by Mr. Allan Sanchez.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

The Board adjourned as the Flood Control District Board and convened into the Jail District. (Motion: Supervisor Davis; second: Vice-Chairman Fanning; motion carried unanimously) (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

JAIL DISTRICT

1. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION FOR AUTHORIZATION TO FILL VACANT: (REQ: SHERIFF)

A DETENTION CORPORAL POSITION

B DETENTION OFFICER POSITION

Vice-Chairman Fanning made a motion to approve, seconded by Supervisor Davis; the motion carried unanimously. (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

The Board adjourned as the Jail District Board and convened into the Regular Meeting. (Motion: Supervisor Davis; second: Vice-Chairman Fanning; motion carried unanimously) (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

ACTION ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE AND VOTE ON LEGAL ACTION IN RESPONSE TO AUDIT USA FILING A PETITION FOR REVIEW WITH THE ARIZONA SUPREME COURT (REQ: COUNTY ATTORNEY)

Supervisor Davis made a motion to approve for legal action and to respond, seconded by Vice-Chairman Fanning; the motion carried unanimously. (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

2. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT WITH COREY ARVIZU, CPA, TO PERFORM A FORENSIC ACCOUNTING RECONCILIATION OF THE COUNTY'S CASH AND INVESTMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026 IN THE NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$50,000 (REQ: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES)

Supervisor Davis made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chairman Fanning; the motion carried unanimously. (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Davis made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chairman Fanning; the motion carried unanimously. (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)

1. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION FOR AUTHORIZATION TO FILL TWO (2) PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR POSITIONS (REQ: SHERIFF)

2. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO AGREEMENT NO. C-00021303 WITH WESTED TO TERMINATE THE AGREEMENT EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 15, 2025 IN THE NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$23,000 FOR COMPLETED DELIVERABLES TO DATE (REQ: SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT)

3. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE GRANT AGREEMENTS WITH THE ARIZONA COMPANION ANIMAL SPAY FOR 2025-2026 IN SUPPORT OF THE NO-KILL SHELTER FOR: (REQ: ANIMAL CONTROL)

A COMMUNITY CAT SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$5,000

B PUBLIC SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000

4. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE BOND FOR DUPLICATE WARRANT #1-017511 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$81.25 DATED 10/31/2025 PAYABLE TO JOHN VIDAL ZUNIGA (REQ: CLERK)

5. APPROVAL OF TAX VALUATION ADJUSTMENTS: (REQ: ASSESSOR)

A 106-25-001 - SOUTH32 HERMOSA, INC., RESOLUTION NO. 57319

B 132-01-197 - LUIS G. VEGA AND YOLOXOCHITL VEGA, RESOLUTION NO. 57320

C 132-01-197 - LUIS G. VEGA AND YOLOXOCHITL, RESOLUTION NO. 57321

D 137-02-458 - JOHN BOUCHIE AND RAQUEL BOUCHIE, RESOLUTION NO. 57322

E P202500034 - SOUTH32 HERMOSA, RESOLUTION NO. 57323

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 11/18/2025

7. APPROVAL OF DEMANDS were approved in the total amount of \$846,396.91, of which \$327,069.10 is from the General Fund. Details of these expenditures are available for inspection during working hours and are to be considered as part of these minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m. (motion: Vice-Chairman Fanning; second: Supervisor Davis; motion carried unanimously) (Ayes: Davis, Fanning, Molera)