

## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING MINUTES**

The Pima County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at their regular meeting place in the Pima County Administration Building (Hearing Room), 130 West Congress Street, Tucson, Arizona, at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 21, 2025. Upon roll call, those present and absent were as follows:

Present: Rex Scott, Chair  
Jennifer Allen, Vice Chair  
\*Dr. Matt Heinz, Member  
Steve Christy, Member  
Andrés Cano, Member

Also Present: Jan Leshar, County Administrator  
Sam E. Brown, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney  
Melissa Manriquez, Clerk of the Board  
John Stuckey, Sergeant at Arms

\*Supervisor Heinz joined the meeting at 9:34 a.m.

### **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT**

The Land Acknowledgement Statement was delivered by Monica Brinkerhoff, M.S.W., Associate Vice President for Early Childhood Education, United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona.

### **PRESENTATION**

### **3. Recognition of the "We A.R.E. Gems" Quarterly Recipients**

Pursuant to Administrative Procedure 23-5, Employee Recognition Program, the following employees have been selected for the quarterly "We A.R.E. Gems" recognition:

- Jaylene Hernandez - Library
- Scott Madsen - Human Resources
- Cynthia Pompa - Health Department
- Melanie Bustamante - Community and Workforce Development
- Marisa Rice - Regional Flood Control
- Ellie Schertz - Conservation Lands and Resources
- Alan Trammel - Assessor's Office

Jan Leshar, County Administrator, presented the awards to the recipients. No Board action was taken.

## **PRESENTATION/PROCLAMATION**

4. Presentation of a proclamation to Natalie Shepp, MPH, Environmental Quality Manager, Department of Environmental Quality; Dustin Williams, Superintendent of Schools; and Cytllali Gonzalez, REACH Program Manager, Public Health Department, proclaiming the week of October 27 through October 31, 2025 to be: "WALK 'N' ROLL TO SCHOOL WEEK"

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and carried by a 4-0 vote, Supervisor Heinz was not present for the vote, to approve the item. Chair Scott made the presentation.

5. Presentation of a proclamation to Peter Fazlollah, President, Alex Miraomontez, Vice President/CFO and Robert Carnal, Marketing Manager, Glaz-Tech Industries, Inc., recognizing: "GLAZ-TECH INDUSTRIES: 35 YEARS OF INNOVATION AND IMPACT"

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and carried by a 4-0 vote, Supervisor Heinz was not present for the vote, to approve the item. Supervisor Cano made the presentation.

6. Presentation of a proclamation to Alethea Do and Krystal Fimbres, proclaiming the day of Friday, October 24, 2025 to be: "NATIONAL LATINX HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY IN PIMA COUNTY"

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Cano and carried by a 4-0 vote, Supervisor Heinz was not present for the vote, to approve the item.

## **7. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Nina Luxenberg addressed the Board in opposition of the Copper World Mine and stated that the project would cause irreparable damage to the environment and health problems in children and young adults.

Luke Felix-Rose spoke in opposition to Project Blue and stated he had proof that County leaders knew of the data center project long before the public became aware of it. He asked the Board to oppose Project Blue.

Vivek Bharathan stated that the community's presence was an encouraging display of opposition to the data center project. He asked the Board to oppose Project Blue and join in the fight against it.

Laura Silva expressed her opposition to Project Blue and asked the Board to reject the land sale because of the financial risk an AI bubble collapse would have on the community.

June William spoke in opposition to the land sale for Project Blue because corporations like Beale Infrastructure did not care about the environmental harm or community cost imposed by data centers.

Lee Zeische asked the Board to stop the land sale for Project Blue because the community would have to cover the costs of the data center's energy usage. She asked that Board members listen to the community's input.

Steve Brown addressed the Board in support of Resolution No. 2025-49. He spoke about the environmental damage mining projects caused and highlighted the importance of preserving natural resources.

Julius Schlosberg expressed his opposition to Project Blue and stated that the corporation would capitalize on Tucson's natural resources and take advantage of the community.

Marta Lynne expressed her concern regarding the estimated water usage of Copper World Mine and the Project Blue data center. She urged the Board to reject both projects for the sake of the community's resources.

Elena Ortiz voiced her concern over Project Blue and Copper World Mine due to their potential impact on Tucson's strained natural resources. She urged the Board to stop the land sale and to oppose the mining project.

Jeff Wirth stated that Supervisor Heinz could block constituents on social media, but could not stop them from attending meetings in person.

Eb Eberlein spoke about the environmental impacts of Project Blue and Copper World were evident, but that the public was also responsible for their water, energy, and technological usage, so they could not put the blame solely on their representatives.

Phineas Anderson asked the Board to support his resolution on executive overreach and the defense of democracy. He stated that as an active political organizer he had large support from the community and requested the Board's cooperation on a resolution.

Susan Tiss expressed her opposition to Project Blue and her disappointment in Supervisor Heinz for supporting the data center in light of the public's opposition. She asked the Board to stop the project.

Eliseo Gomez, Science Teacher, Pueblo High School, urged the Board to stop Project Blue's land sale because of environmental damage and public health costs. He thanked Supervisors Allen and Cano for their opposition to the project.

Sarah Tarver-Wahlquist addressed the Board and asked them to stop the data center land sale. She stressed that many residents could not voice their opposition because of work and/or family responsibilities.

John Dougherty, Executive Director, Save the Scenic Santa Ritas, expressed support for the Resolution that opposed Copper World Mine due to its environmental impact. He stated that Hudbay was not a trustworthy company.

Paige Humphrey, Outreach Coordinator, Save the Scenic Santa Ritas, urged the Board to pass Resolution No. 2025-49, because of the damage a mining project would have on the natural resources and rich history of the Sonoran Desert.

Kielly Lewis addressed the Board in opposition to Project Blue. She urged the Board to listen to the public and oppose the land sale.

Kitana Ananda stressed the negative impact Project Blue's high water and energy usage would have on the community's health and utility costs. She stated that the push to build data centers was part of a federal government push for unregulated AI that would be used for surveillance and political repression.

Lynn Price asked the Board to oppose Project Blue because of the electronic waste the project would accumulate, since there were no federal regulations that covered e-waste management. She also expressed appreciation for the Pima County Climate Action Plan 2025 to 2030 and Board of Supervisors Policy 31.4.

Shirley Requard spoke in opposition of Minute Item Nos. 20 and 21 regarding the Regional Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Project and Project Blue. She stated that a data center would have a negative impact on water resources and asked the Board to stop the land sale.

Melinda Matson Spina expressed her concern that the government would use Project Blue for AI surveillance. She asked that the Board reject the data center, regulate AI infrastructure and demand international diplomacy.

Betsy Wilkening urged the Board to reject the land sale for the data center as the environmental impacts would violate the Board's wishes in their Climate Action Plan and Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

Gayle Hartman addressed the Board in opposition of the Copper World Mine Project. She stated that the environmental health and the historic and cultural preservation of the Santa Rita Mountains were more important.

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Chair Scott indicated that Call to the Public had reached the one-hour limit.

It was then moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to extend Call to the Public.

Alice Hatcher urged Chair Scott and Supervisor Heinz to oppose the land sale for the data center because of the environmental impact, growing surveillance culture, and increased utility costs. She asked them to listen to their constituents.

Glenda Avalos voiced her opposition to Project Blue and asked Supervisors Christy Heinz to listen to the public's opinion.

Kathleen Dryer addressed the Board and described their relationship with constituents as dysfunctional. She stated that the community would suffer should the Board complete the land sale for Project Blue and urged them to stop the land sale.

Reed Spurling spoke regarding an article that covered election results in Falls Church, Virginia, where a political newcomer who opposed data centers beat the top Democratic candidate. He asked the Board to reject the land sale, or they would face electoral consequences.

Maria Cooperstein stated that Project Blue did not serve the public's interests because the financial and environmental burden of the project would be placed on residents. She asked the Board to oppose the land sale.

Laurie Kierstead-Joseph, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Pima Community College, spoke in opposition of H.R.1. She stated that the loss of SNAP benefits would force adults in their education program to seek additional low paying work instead of gaining the skills they needed for family-sustaining careers.

Joel Strabala spoke in opposition of the Pima County Climate Action Plan because it went against President Trump's executive order that protected the American energy policy from state overreach. He also opposed Project Blue and believed Tucson's energy infrastructure could not support its energy demands.

Suzanne Teeple expressed her concern over H.R.1's effects on refugee families, as the loss of SNAP benefits meant children would not receive adequate nutrition required to reach growth milestones, remain healthy, or succeed in school.

Joelle Zuberi voiced her concern over the loss of SNAP benefits for refugee families. She stated that as a representative of the Afghan Survivors Impacted by Combat Program, she believed that H.R.1 would place hard financial strain on Afghan refugee families and affect their ability to be self-sufficient.

Bakr Rajab shared that he and his family were legal refugees who struggled when they arrived in the U.S. because minimum wage jobs could not sustain a family easily. He stated that SNAP benefits were an investment to the lives of children and were a great help to families that depended on them.

Jeffrey Simons, Executive Director, Tucson Refugee Ministry, expressed his concern over H.R.1's effects on the refugee community. He believed that refugees were unfairly and unjustly being cut off and needed help in their transition to living in a new country.

Timoteio Padilla addressed the Board in opposition to Project Blue. He stated that it negatively impacted water resources, high energy usage and would sustain very few full-time jobs. He also expressed his concern over the possibility of AI surveillance in the city.

Kate Hotten, Co-Executive Director, Coalition of Sonoran Desert Protection, expressed opposition to the Copper World Mine Project and thanked the Board for their continued opposition on the mining project. She also expressed support for the Climate Action Plan and requested that the Board ask staff to come back with a funding plan.

Anna Burke, Associate Director, Catholic Community Services (CCS), raised concern over H.R.1 cuts that would negatively affect refugees that settled in the Tucson. She stated that CCS would do all they could to support those in need but asked that the Board support the community as well.

Barbara Eisworth stated that the abrupt cut of SNAP benefits would cause thousands of refugees to become food insecure. She noted that refugees had escaped war and genocide before coming to the U.S. and needed help getting on their feet.

Asa Ramsey spoke in opposition of Project Blue and Copper World Mine, and thanked Supervisors Allen and Cano for meeting with the No Desert Data Center Coalition. She stated that the coalition had found corruption and a lack of integrity at the leadership level surrounding Project Blue and would pursue legal action, if needed.

John Doherty expressed his displeasure with the government for selling out to corporate interests. He thanked Supervisors Cano and Allen for voting against Project Blue and asked the other Board members to remember who their constituents were and to uphold their values.

Marisol Winfrey Herrera asked that the Board pay attention to the opposition of their constituents and stop the land sale for Project Blue.

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Chair Scott closed Call to the Public.

Supervisor Cano thanked the speakers for their attendance amidst their busy schedules and stated that the questions raised about Project Blue were serious and deserved answers. He stated that since April 15th he had asked the CEO of Tucson Electric Power (TEP) to meet with him and twice those requests had gone unanswered. He stated that he was told that Project Blue would consume more energy at full capacity than all Pima County households combined and expressed concern over the fact that TEP had proposed a 14% hike on energy prices the same day the Board had voted on the data center. He stated that after the City of Tucson rejected the annexation of the land, TEP turned to state regulators to move the project forward and that the public needed to hear directly from TEP. He asked the County Administrator to invite the CEO and her team to a future meeting on behalf of the Board to discuss Project Blue and the proposed rate increases. He noted the importance of transparency, collaboration and protection of the public's interests, which was shared by all Board members.

Supervisor Allen thanked the speakers for voicing their concerns and stated that their persistence is what pushed decision makers to do the right thing. She indicated that their presence had also called her to question whether she was doing enough to oppose Project Blue's development in the community. She admitted that she could do more to stop the data center project and asked her colleagues to change their minds about Project Blue. She cited a New York Times article where internal documents at Amazon mentioned their plan to automate 75% of their operations, which made her question what they were doing in the community to support their constituents. She also thanked those speakers who raised H.R.1. concerns regarding SNAP benefits and acknowledged the hardships refugees faced as newcomers to the United States.

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8. **CONVENE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to convene to Executive Session at 12:16 p.m.

9. **RECONVENE**

The meeting reconvened at 1:17 p.m. All members were present.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

10. Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3) and (4), for legal advice and direction regarding hiring outside counsel related to the Pima County Sheriff's Department.

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to proceed as discussed in Executive Session.

## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **11. Board of Supervisors Representative Updates on Boards, Committees and Commissions and Any Other Municipalities**

Chair Scott stated that there had been ongoing discussion about joint meetings between Pima County and the Tucson City Council, and the County Administrator and her team had followed up with city staff to move forward with that. He mentioned that while he and Mayor Romero had discussed the possibility of joint meetings, there had also been previous discussions about a joint meeting between former Chair Grijalva and Mayor Romero. Chair Scott stated that he felt it was appropriate to share the agendas. He thanked Board members for the approval of the resolution to move forward with the transition of the Metropolitan Education Commission, which began in 1990 as a joint City/County commission and would expand to include participation from colleagues in Santa Cruz County.

Supervisor Cano stated that as the Board's liaison to Visit Tucson, he congratulated their partners for launching a bold new brand that captured Tucson's spirit, creativity, and heart. He stated that the rebrand was not just about a new logo, it told Tucson's story of shared culture, connection, and possibility. He stated that there would be a lot of earned media in the next few weeks due to Visit Tucson's rebrand as they tried to figure out how to put Tucson on the map as an exciting destination. He expressed gratitude to the County Administrator, Director Frisch, and his Board colleagues who helped partner in those efforts. He shared that he had also participated in welcoming Savannah Guthrie back home to Tucson during the previous week.

Supervisor Allen stated that the Board of Health discussed the Health Department's plan to be part of the new due diligence process for economic development projects. She stated that the Health Department was developing a general framework and would use it as a pilot with the data center project to determine if it worked. She stated that they received updates on the cooling centers employed throughout the heat season and even though they received more visits this season than last year, totaling over 35,000, there was an increase in heat related deaths from the previous year. She stated that the RFPs were currently open for the opioid settlement funds, they discussed the standing order for vaccines at the County and State levels and expressed appreciation to the leadership at the County Health Department for ensuring that vaccines were accessible to the community. She asked Chair Scott if he could provide an update on the Chamber given that they had received a quarterly report that showed zero job growth. She noted that the Chamber listed mining as a priority and felt that the Chamber's interests conflicted with the Board's values, especially since the Board had approved Resolution No. 2025-49 and had received a lot of community support around their opposition to Hudbay and the mine.



Chair Scott stated that there had not been a meeting of the Chamber Board of Directors since this Board's last meeting, but regarding the quarterly report, he had reached out to County Administration with questions about the tables and data in the Chamber's report, and had asked them to provide additional information to the Board on the data, how said data informed the dialogue between County and Chamber staff, and about the additional attachments included in the report. He indicated that he was especially interested in the attachments that dealt with closed or lost prospects and wanted more information on those, as he felt that Deputy County Administrator DeBonis, Jr., or the Director of Economic Development would be able to explain the references in the reports a bit easier to the Board.

Supervisor Christy shared that the Summerhaven Mt. Lemmon Community received a flap grant for a long-awaited project. He stated that the project involved collaboration between the Forestry Department and Pima County to create 75 new parking spaces along the stretch of land from the north entrance of Summerhaven, down to the south end, along with 21 additional street parking spots and public restrooms. He stated that parking was an ongoing issue in the Summerhaven Community, especially during its high festival time, and the project would provide some much-needed relief to residents. He stated that Mt. Lemmon was one of the biggest tourist attractions in Pima County, and this project would be a great asset, and he thanked everyone in Pima County who was involved in it.

Supervisor Cano requested some additional information about the discussions with the City of Tucson related to a joint meeting and asked if a joint meeting would be held in November.

Jan Leshar, County Administrator, stated that there was a tentative date of November 18, 2025, but it had not been finalized yet. She explained that the rough schedule looked like the Board would begin their regular meeting at 9:00 a.m., with a joint lunch at noon and then the joint meeting from approximately 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. from about 12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. She stated that if the Board had items left on their agenda, they would reconvene after the joint meeting to address them. She added that there had been discussion to hold the joint meeting at the Pima Association of Governments office since they had the space needed for both bodies to come together and provide availability for public attendance.

Supervisor Cano stated that the District 5 team would participate in a tour of The Loop and invited his colleagues to join him as he felt it would be a helpful visit to have before the joint meeting discussion.

No Board action was taken.

## **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

### **12. Climate Action Plan for County Operations 2025-2030**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed Climate Action Plan for County Operations for 2025-2030.

(Clerk's Note: See the attached verbatim related to this item.)

It was moved by Supervisor Allen and seconded by Supervisor Cano to continue the item to the Board of Supervisors' Meeting of December 2, 2025. Upon the vote, the motion unanimously carried 5-0.

## **CLERK OF THE BOARD**

### **13. Flowing Wells Irrigation District Annual Election Cancellation**

Discussion/action regarding a request, pursuant to A.R.S. §16-410(A), to cancel the annual election of the Board of Directors of the Flowing Wells Irrigation District and appoint Eric Myrmo as a Member of the Board of Directors of the Flowing Wells Irrigation District, to serve a three-year term effective January 1, 2026.

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Cano and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

## **FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **14. Monthly Financial Update**

Discussion/Direction/Action regarding a monthly financial update on the County's financial performance.

Art Cuaron, Director, Finance and Risk Management, provided a slide show presentation of the County's financial update through September, Period 3. He stated that the overview of this period appeared stable, however, this was for the actuals through September and their forecast was based on those numbers. He stated that revenues were projected to exceed budgeted amounts and expenditures were trending lower than budgeted amounts for the fiscal year, with those two combined, they saw a fund balance reserve of approximately \$9.3 million. He stated this was in excess of the required reserve of \$92 million adopted during the FY26 budget and department expenditures remained largely on budget through Period 3. He stated that there was \$810,000.00 in the General Fund Revenue variance column, largely driven by the projected increase in State Shared Sales Tax Revenue, which was a good sign through Period 3, as well as on the expenditure side with a slight reduction of about \$217,000.00. He stated they forecasted that it would continue, however, things would be subject to change as they went into October and November. He stated that the Fund Balance Reconciliation for 2026

was projected to be \$101.4 million and when the required reserve of \$92 million was subtracted, it left an excess of about \$9.3 million. He noted the importance of the required reserve returning to 17% and as they moved into the '26/27 budget year, they were approximately \$1.9 million short of the reserve requirement.

Chair Scott noted that the Board previously decided to return the reserve level to 17% based on staff's recommendation. He recalled that when he first joined the Board, the recommended reserve range was 15% to 17%. He asked whether accrediting or other oversight agencies had indicated that 17% remained at the upper end of that range, or if the range no longer applied.

Jan Leshar, County Administrator, explained that a reserve range did exist and that maintaining the upper end of the range was recommended. She stated that to remain fiscally conservative this early in the fiscal year, the goal was to maintain 17% allowing a margin of flexibility within the 15%–17% range. She stated their current projections were based on the full 17%, which aligned with guidance from bond counsel and outside rating agencies. She noted that they had a cushion that allowed the Board to reduce the reserve to 15% last year.

Chair Scott confirmed that a range still existed and clarified that the recommendation from all agencies was to remain at the upper end of that range.

Ms. Leshar concurred.

Supervisor Heinz noted that the Board discussed this issue several times and asked why they could not set the reserve at 16% as a compromise, so that the approximately \$1.966 million shown in the parenthesis would essentially be eliminated for the next fiscal year.

Ms. Leshar stated that would be a policy discussion by the Board for next fiscal year.

Mr. Cuaron added that the \$103 million figure was an estimate based on 17% of the audited FY25 financials, which would be finalized in December and any future changes to that number would be reflected at that time. He explained that the General Fund contingency budget was set at \$1 million for FY26 and that nothing was used beyond the \$106,000.00 for the Human Resources Pay Strategies which left \$894,000.00 available for the remainder of the fiscal year.

This item was for discussion only. No Board action was taken.

## 15. **Quarterly Report on Collections**

Staff recommends acceptance of the Quarterly Report on Collections for the period ending June 30, 2025.

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

## **REAL PROPERTY**

### **16. Surplus Property**

Staff requests approval to sell surplus property consisting of 13.34 acres of vacant land, located east of Trico Road and south of Hardin Road, without public auction to the Town of Marana, in the amount of \$345,000.00. (District 3)

It was moved by Chair Scott and seconded by Supervisor Allen to approve the item. No vote was taken at this time.

Supervisor Heinz asked if the proceeds from the property sale could be used to feed refugee families or support food banks, or if the funds had to stay within Real Property.

Carmine DeBonis Jr., Deputy County Administrator, stated that the parcel was acquired by the Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department from funds generated by operation of the sewer system, so the proceeds would be returned to them and could only be reinvested in wastewater projects.

Upon the vote, the motion unanimously carried 5-0.

## **CONTRACT AND AWARD**

### **Community and Workforce Development**

### **17. International Sonoran Desert Alliance, to provide for the Ajo One Stop Service Center, General Fund, contract amount \$220,000.00 (PO2500027005)**

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Cano and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

### **Elections**

### **18. Regional Transportation Authority, to provide an intergovernmental agreement for election services for any elections held in 2026, contract amount \$1,750,000.00 revenue (CT2500000060)**

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Cano and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

## **Human Resources**

19. Arizona Board of Regents, on behalf of the University of Arizona, to provide an intergovernmental agreement to partner with the University of Arizona's Eller College of Management for related education and employment of interns to work at Pima County, General Fund, contract amount \$133,000.00 (SC2500000568)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Cano and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

## **Office of Digital Inclusion**

20. Town of Sahuarita, to provide an intergovernmental agreement for Pima County Regional Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Project, term date 10/21/25 to 6/30/50, no cost (CT2500000068)

It was moved by Chair Scott and seconded by Supervisor Cano to approve the item. No vote was taken at this time.

Supervisor Christy inquired whether the project funding was under review by the current administration. He believed that the broadband loop was obsolete and did not seem like a very expeditious way of spending money. He felt that providing constituents with Starlink would be more financially efficient.

Jan Leshner, County Administrator, stated that the grants were not being reviewed by the current administration at this time.

Chair Scott stated that the Town of Oro Valley and the Town of Sahuarita would be providing either monetary or in-kind contributions to Pima County.

Supervisor Cano noted that both intergovernmental agreements would go into 2050 which indicated serious capital improvement in the region. He commented that Starlink would not function properly if it had no broadband connection to plug into to be able to have electricity, data and internet connectivity. He stated that the project was a regional priority and that it was noble work for the jurisdictions of Oro Valley and Sahuarita to join Pima County in connecting residents.

Supervisor Allen expressed appreciation for the items since they would expand access to residents in Sahuarita, Amado, Arivaca and along the southern border. She stated that this was important because the projects helped fulfill a key component of the Prosperity Initiative by ensuring that all Pima County residents had access, equipment and skills for digital inclusion which expanded opportunities for economic growth in rural communities. She highlighted the department's recent partnership with the Tucson Indian Center (TIC) for the Learn to Earn Workshops which provided new laptops and helped TIC participants gain digital skills so they could access and navigate the online world.

Upon the vote, the motion carried 4-1, Supervisor Christy voted "Nay."

21. Town of Oro Valley, to provide an intergovernmental agreement for Pima County Regional Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Project, term date 10/21/25 to 6/30/50, contract amount \$200,000.00 revenue (CT2500000066)

(Clerk's Note: See Minute Item No. 20, for discussion related to this item.)

It was moved by Chair Scott and seconded by Supervisor Cano to approve the item. Upon the vote, the motion carried 4-1, Supervisor Christy voted "Nay."

## **Procurement**

### **22. Award**

Amendment of Award: Supplier Contract No. SC2400001757, Amendment No. 2, Shamrock Foods Company (Headquarters: Phoenix, AZ), to provide food products for the Pima County Adult Detention Complex. This amendment increases the annual award by \$2,200,000.00 from \$1,650,000.00 to \$3,850,000.00 for a cumulative not-to-exceed contract amount of \$5,500,000.00. The increase in annual award is due to a higher inmate population, the transition of meal preparation back to the jail kitchen after renovations, and a 6% rise in industry-wide food costs. Funding Source: General Fund. Administering Department: Sheriff's Department.

It was moved by Chair Scott and seconded by Supervisor Heinz to approve the item. No vote was taken at this time.

Supervisor Christy stated that this item was being amended by the Sheriff's Department by increasing the annual award by \$2.2 million, which more than doubled the amount and attributed it to kitchen renovations, a 6% food increase, and a higher inmate population. He stated that it was incredulous that the renovations had not been forecasted in the budget since they were aware of the needed renovations and he did not believe a food increase or higher inmate population would double the budget. He added that the County Administrator's memorandum indicated that the Sheriff was preliminarily making his budget amounts, but it did not seem to connect when he increased it by \$2.2 million for those items. He asked for an explanation of the urgency as to why the suddenness, it was not in the original budget but was being added to his budget with items that he should have been aware of when he made the original budget request.

Jan Leshner, County Administrator, stated that the current budget had increased costs for food service, related to the jail kitchen renovations and how he managed transportation of the food during renovations, which had taken much longer than anticipated. She noted that the combination of higher food costs, a potential increase in the jail population, and transportation expenses had resulted in a request for additional funds for the food service contract.

Supervisor Christy asked if the increase had more than doubled.

Ms. Leshner responded yes.

Supervisor Heinz stated that the jail census had crept up since COVID, which was at about 1,300, but was currently 1,800 per day instead of the 1,650 that had been anticipated in the planning for the original budget numbers. He stated that it would cost less to provide food for the jail if there were fewer mouths in it to feed. He stated that they should all be continuing discussion to get the County Attorney, Adult Probation, and Courts on board, to not keep people in jail unless it was necessary. He stated that several hundred of those individuals should probably not be there because they were not violent criminals. He stated that most had not been adjudicated as having committed any crimes at all but were there before they went through the trial. He added that these individuals were innocent until proven guilty, and that they could be given ankle trackers to make it cheaper and still very safe for the community, especially for the folks that were not charged with any kind of violent crime. He stated that the discussion needed to be reinvigorated because the jail population should be lower than it was at this time.

Supervisor Allen agreed with Supervisor Heinz's comments. She stated that her district office had reached out to the Sheriff and asked because it should seem on the surface, that costs should go down as they shifted from relying on prepared food to having the kitchen back online, and that should be a cheaper option. She stated that they wanted to understand those numbers and how they were going to calculate. She acknowledged that the Sheriff's Department responded very quickly and provided staff information, but they still awaited the financial information. She stated that they received some information that explained the jail food costs, to the extent that they had increased and shared details about the kitchen renovations, which had cost more than \$3.8 million, of which 73% came out of the Special Revenue funds. She stated they had taken a tour of the jail and there was lot of styrofoam packaging, and that was going to be the shift, but this would indeed put an end to all the styrofoam served meals and plastic utensils, but they were waiting for some additional financial information.

Supervisor Cano echoed the comments of his colleagues from Districts 2 and 3. He stated that he had recently spoken with the Sheriff, and looked forward to a ride along in District 5 in the San Xavier District. He stated that the Board needed more data about inmate population. He stated that in Juvenile court, there was a condensed daily detention summary that the Board should have access to as the folks that approved these line-by-line expenditures. He stated that he wanted to work with the Sheriff's Department to ensure they had the resources that they needed, and in that same spirit, the Board needed the data and requested that the Board receive this data. He sympathized with the folks in the kitchen at the jails and stated that the Board had an obligation as a County to provide for the inmates and ensure that they were fed. He stated this was an industry-wide standard where inflation, under the current administration at the federal level, was out of control. He stated that it was criticized last year as one party's problem, and it continued to

trickle down making its way into a Shamrock contract. He stated that he looked forward to continuing to work with the Sheriff in a collaborative way on many issues.

Supervisor Christy stated that he agreed with Supervisor Heinz's comment about reinvigorating the discussion about who should or should not be incarcerated. He stated that he had heard very often from his colleagues, particularly Supervisor Heinz, that some of these individuals should not be in jail or needed to be there on a lesser term. He stated that when these sweeping generalizations were said, he would like specifics to see exactly who he was referring to when he made those comments. He stated they should know who these individuals were and why they were there in the first place and why they should not be there. He stated that if they dealt with specifics and got back to that discussion about who should be incarcerated or not, they needed to find out why they were there, how they got there, and why they should not be there.

Chair Scott followed up on both Supervisors Christy and Heinz's comments and reminded his colleagues when the Board had discussed Initial Appearances and the intergovernmental agreement that dealt with them, that this question had been asked many times. He stated the questions asked were who was in jail because they were a flight risk or a risk to public safety and who was in jail because they simply could not make bail. He stated that he had never received a definitive answer to that question but what he had heard was there were several ways of answering that. He stated that there were a lot of definitions for flight risk or risk to public safety and the data that answered that question could come from a combination of entities like the courts and the Sheriff. He stated that he told the Administrator that if and when the Board took up the issue of renovations to the existing jail or new jail, that those questions needed to be answered, or the Board would not be able to a fulsome conversation on that topic.

Upon the vote, the motion unanimously carried 5-0.

### **Regional Wastewater Reclamation**

23. Arizona Board of Regents, University of Arizona, to provide a lease agreement for the University of Arizona WEST Center located at 2959 W. Calle Agua Nueva, contract amount \$905,000.00 revenue/5 year term (CT2500000046)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

### **Transportation**

24. Union Pacific Railroad Co. (Headquarters: Omaha, NE), Amendment No. 1, to provide a supplemental agreement for the Union Pacific Railroad Tucson Yard Expansion - Palo Verde Road and amend contractual language, no cost (SC2500000563)



It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

25. Union Pacific Railroad Co. (Headquarters: Omaha, NE), Amendment No. 1, to provide a supplemental agreement for the Union Pacific Railroad Tucson Yard Expansion - Ajo Way and amend contractual language, no cost (SC2500000564)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

26. Union Pacific Railroad Co. (Headquarters: Omaha, NE), Amendment No. 1, to provide a supplemental agreement for the Union Pacific Railroad Tucson Yard Expansion - Alvernon Way and amend contractual language, no cost (SC2500000565)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

27. City of Tucson, Amendment No. 2, to provide for the design and construction of improvements to Sunset Road - Silverbell to I-10 Improvement Project, RTA Roadway Improvements Element No. 8, extend contract term to 11/10/30 and amend contractual language, no cost (CTN-TR-22-131)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

#### **GRANT APPLICATION/ACCEPTANCE**

28. **Acceptance – County Attorney**

Arizona Board of Regents, University of Arizona, Amendment No. 1, to provide for the Arizona Collaborative Justice Initiative, to complete research and responses for post conviction filings, extend grant term to 9/30/26 and amend grant language, no cost (GA-PCA-70385)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Christy and carried by a 4-1 vote, Supervisor Christy voted "Nay," to approve the item.

29. **Acceptance - Recorder**

U.S. Election Assistance Commission, to provide for the 2023 Help America Vote Act Election Security Grant, \$132,418.93 (G-RE-93642)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Christy and carried by a 4-1 vote, Supervisor Christy voted "Nay," to approve the item.

30. **Acceptance – Sheriff**

Governor's Office of Highway Safety, to provide for accident investigation/related materials and supplies (virtual crash software and PIX4Dmatic license), \$17,622.00 (G-SD-84834)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

31. **Acceptance – Sheriff**

Governor's Office of Highway Safety, to provide for STEP enforcement education/related materials and supplies (RADARs, antennas), \$20,041.00 (G-SD-84837)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

32. **Acceptance – Sheriff**

Governor's Office of Highway Safety, to provide for occupant protection awareness and education/related materials and supplies (car seats distribution to communities for education and awareness), \$6,769.00 (G-SD-84835)

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

**FRANCHISE/LICENSE/PERMIT**

33. **Hearing – Liquor License**

Job No. 355173, Wesley Frank Ford, Sonoran Sweet & Savory, 100 W. Estrella Avenue, Ajo, Series 12, Restaurant, New License.

The Chair inquired whether anyone wished to address the Board. No one appeared. It was moved by Chair Scott and seconded by Supervisor Allen to close the public hearing, approve the license and forward the recommendation to the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control. No vote was taken at this time.

Supervisor Allen stated that Sonoran Sweet & Savory was a new business in Ajo that had been open for a few months and she commended them for their community engagement and for supporting the community's needs.

Upon the vote, the motion unanimously carried 5-0.

## **PROCUREMENT**

### **34. Hearing – Solicitation No. IFB-2500015692, Esperero Wash at Sunrise Drive Culvert Replacement**

#### **Appeal of Procurement Director's Decision**

Pursuant to Pima County Code 11.20.010(H), Falcone Brothers & Associates, Inc., appeals the decision of the Procurement Director regarding Solicitation No. IFB-2500015692, Esperero Wash at Sunrise Drive Culvert Replacement.

Bruce Collins, Director, Procurement, provided background on this particular project and stated that it was originally bid in May of 2025 through their Job Order Contract (JOC) process. He stated that all the bids received exceeded the limit where they could award a contract and it necessitated a rebid. He explained that with the rebid process, internal staff at Procurement met with the impacted departments to create a strategy that could be utilized to allow the project to be completed before next year's monsoon season. He stated that in consideration of the various strategies, they went through all the Procurement processes that were afforded to them and selected a limited competition strategy. He stated that strategy was approved by both the State of Arizona and Pima County's Procurement process, called a Limited Competition. He explained it was limited because they would select a pre-qualified list of contractors that had demonstrated the planning and the scheduling necessary to complete the project, in a condensed time frame for this two-lane road. He stated that closure of the road was not practical and feasible, so they would close one lane for six months and accelerate the project schedule. He stated that what they wanted to ensure was that they selected a process that allowed them to select pre-qualified vendors that had demonstrated the ability to do this. He stated that they often relied on bonding, but if a road closure was delayed while they resolved the bonding issues, that was not in the best interest of Pima County. He stated that they obtained the appropriate approvals, the solicitation was issued and they received the protest on September 24th. He stated that the protest was based upon Pima County not having the authority to use that particular Procurement method. He reiterated that both the State of Arizona revised statute and Pima County Procurement Code granted the Procurement Director to select that Procurement method, thus, the protest was denied. He stated that for the record and in conversation with the appellant, this was not the first time Pima County had used this Procurement method over the past six years, the Board had awarded five of nine Limited Competition Procurement, nor was there any other requirement except for being in a qualified list.

Nico Falcone, Vice President, Falcone Brothers & Associates, Inc., stated that they believed that this project for a culvert replacement should have been an open bid because it did not qualify as an emergency. He stated that if there were stamped plans and time for planning, and if this was an emergency work, it would have been done right away as they had problems back in August of 2022 and a design build should have been completed in order for this work to be done. He requested a

written statement of justification as to why the normal procedure Procurement methods were not followed, which should be included in the official Procurement file under Pima County Procurement Code Section 11.12.060. He stated that Esperero Wash had issues in 2022 during the monsoon season, and at the current time Pima County Procurement had an emergency crew that came in, cleaned up and opened the road two weeks earlier than expected, as stated in the Arizona Daily Star on August 25, 2022. He stated that they also indicated that the permanent repairs were to be done after monsoon season ended. He added that they felt they were being discriminated against and that in a letter dated October 15, 2025, regarding additional information, stating that conducting an open solicitation process, a low bidder may not possess the expertise required to meet the complexity of this project. He stated that they had completed a project of the same scope for Pima County at the intersection of Continental Road and Abrego Drive, as well as a major part of the Loop, one of the largest pedestrian bridges in southern Arizona over Camino de la Tierra Road, which Pima County had also received an award for this project. He asked where in the solicitation it showed that this was a Limited Competition Procurement method and who were the other five companies that received an invitation for this project and method. He stated that similar Procurement methods that were not open bid projects were usually more costly to the taxpayers.

Chair Scott stated that this project was in his district and asked County Administration whether this was the result of a grant the County was awarded from the federal government, and that the grant was applied for by both the Transportation Department and the Regional Flood Control District.

Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator, responded in the affirmative and stated that grant funds were obtained to assist with the upgrade of the culvert.

Chair Scott asked if there was anything related to the grant requirements that caused them to decide on this Procurement, as far as getting the project up and running before monsoon season.

Mr. DeBonis, Jr., responded that if they were, they were only secondary to the other factors mentioned by Director Collins, so the traffic control component and the criticality of maintaining the flow of traffic while the project was ongoing, and the time constraint to ensure that the culvert replacement was completed ahead of the following upcoming monsoon season.

Chair Scott stated that the applicant had asked in the solicitation where did it state that this was a Limited Competition Procurement method. He stated that it was his understanding that it was not stated in the solicitation, but was a decision made after bids were received consistent with both local and state law.

Mr. Collins clarified that the initial bid was under the JOC process and there was a separate solicitation to which they received the protest. He stated there were two different bids and the protest was on the second Limited Competition bid.

Chair Scott inquired about the distinction between the two types of bids.

Mr. Collins explained that with the JOC process, the Board would award a pool of contractors that would spot projects up to a certain dollar amount, so those contractors would receive a delivery order, and they could complete a small dollar amount project. He stated that for projects above that threshold, within the pool itself, they would compete for an opportunity to complete their project. He stated that threshold was \$3 million, so when this project was originally sent out, all the bids came in over \$3 million, thus, they could not award it under that particular process. He stated that with the limited competition within that group that was pre-qualified, they had a chance to bid on it within that group, and the lowest responsible bidder would win. He added that as shown on the addendum, the company that Procurement recommended came in lower than their cost estimate, so Procurement's position was that they would recommend the Board deny the appeal and award the contract. He added that the statement that these types of solicitations normally were higher, the fact that they received a bid that was lower, disputed that thought.

Gaetano Falcone, President, Falcone Brothers & Associates, Inc., stated that they had been an approved contractor through the state and completed many projects for the County. He stated that they always did the same thing every week, but this bid did not fall under the statutes that were mentioned. He stated that the County did not give licenses, those came from the state. He stated that Arizona issued licenses and each license could do the work and they had been qualified since 1995. He stated that they successfully completed many projects like this and felt like they were discriminated against since Procurement invited 15 other contractors but left them out.

Chair Scott asked whether the County Attorney was consulted to ensure that Procurement was making the appropriate statutory interpretations.

Mr. Collins explained that they discussed it with the County Attorney, and they affirmed the decision that they made based upon the statute was correct. He stated that what was typically misunderstood regarding the emergency Procurement statute was that it went beyond health, welfare and safety. He stated that it also cited that if there was a situation where it was public exigency or project was in the best interest of the County, then they could use this method. He stated that to get the project complete to mitigate the traffic concerns prior to the monsoon, their interpretation was that it was in the best interest of the County.

It was moved by Chair Scott and seconded by Supervisor Heinz to close the public hearing, uphold the decision of the Procurement Director and deny the appeal. No vote was taken at this time.

Supervisor Cano requested that Director Collins consult him and/or his Chief of Staff prior to an appeal coming before the Board. He felt that he needed to understand the language more and wanted to ensure that he understood when small business owners came in front of the Board, what the Board's role was as a County.

Upon the vote, the motion carried 4-0, Supervisor Allen was not present for the vote.

## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **35. Evolution of the Metropolitan Education Commission into the Southern Arizona Education Council**

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 – 48, of the Board of Supervisors, amending County Resolution No. 1990-178, to formally evolve the Metropolitan Education Commission into the Southern Arizona Education Council, in partnership with City of Tucson and Santa Cruz County. (District 1)

Rocque Perez, Councilmember, Ward 5, City of Tucson, and Head of the Metropolitan Education Commission (MEC), stated that political and financial changes had led to the need for an organized strategy around supporting high schools and post-secondary institutions towards higher education. He stated that this was the first time they had seen a decline in FAFSA completion, due to the Trump Administration retroactively declining a number of applications across the U.S., which disenfranchised mixed-status families. He stated that with the federal cuts and decreased staffing at the Department of Education, students had difficulty speaking with someone about their FAFSA applications or to receive support, and this led to an incredible decline in college attendance at the University of Arizona, but attendance at Pima Community College (PCC) saw an increase in their numbers, which spoke to the fact that PCC worked intentionally to make college affordable and upped its efforts to increase access. He stated that high schools more than ever needed support. He said that the MEC would formalize its role as a means of civic engagement for young people, and push students to take a more active, constructive role in local government. He added that formalization would also incorporate participation from other municipalities such as Santa Cruz County, which would act alongside the City of Tucson to incorporate into that area. He stated that this would allow the MEC to expand their scope of service without the need to touch the financial contribution of Pima County. He stated that the City of Tucson made a more significant investment this year and they would see some similar investments with Santa Cruz County, in addition to other public and private interests.

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Allen and carried by 4-1 vote, Supervisor Christy voted "Nay," to adopt the Resolution.

36. **Reaffirming Opposition to the Proposed Copper World Project**

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 – 49, of the Board of Supervisors, reaffirming opposition to the proposed Copper World Project. (District 5)

It was moved by Supervisor Cano and seconded by Supervisor Heinz to adopt the Resolution. No vote was taken at this time.

Supervisor Cano stated that the Resolution reaffirmed the County's longstanding opposition to the Copper World Mine Project in the Santa Rita Mountains. He stated that the County had taken this stance in 2007, 2019, and 2022, and as a new member of the Board, he wanted their opposition to the project's threats to water and air quality in the community to be clear, especially with the recent developments of proposed state trust land that would enable the expansion of mine tailings near homes and Copper Ridge Elementary School. He stated that this project would dig multiple open pit mines in the Santa Ritas, pump thousands of acre feet of groundwater from the Santa Cruz River Basin, release harmful dust and emissions, and cause lasting damage to the Cienega Creek. He commented that while the Copper World Mining company claimed to be securing American copper for American supply chains, the project would be operated by a Canadian company and partially financed by Mitsubishi, both foreign companies that would leave environmental costs to local residents as they took profits abroad. He stated that the Resolution reaffirmed the County's commitment to protecting its public and environmental health and helped direct County staff to advocate at the state and federal levels against the project and land sale. He stated that Southern Arizona's future depended on the protection of its water, air and desert landscape and that Pima County would always stand with the community and not with extractive industries.

Supervisor Heinz supported his colleague's statements and asked the County Administrator to continue advocating their opposition to the Land Department about the 160-acre land sale with Hudbay for mine tailings in the region. He stated that if the sale went through, it would increase the mine's footprint which he believed invalidated state air quality permits and other permits that were previously granted.

Supervisor Christy stated that he had consistently advocated for the mining project and all of its versions and found it interesting that opponents of this mine pointed out when corporations operated out of state because their opposition to mining projects would not change if a company was local. He acknowledged the resolutions passed by the Board in the past but noted that the Board had no jurisdiction over mining projects as that control belonged to 24 federal agencies, which had been opened and greenlit by the Biden administration. He stated that agencies could try to slow mining operations, but the truth of the matter was that the mine would open, and it could not be stopped, regardless of whether they held discussions about it or if reports came out in opposition to the mine. He indicated that multiple speakers claimed the mine would harmfully affect the environment, but that those had been publicly addressed and debated. He stated that Hudbay was

more than willing to have open dialogue about the mining operations and the community and state had a rich mining history. He added that there were also multiple related industries in the region to assist the mines, so this Resolution would not change the fact that the mine would continue.

Supervisor Christy called the question.

Upon the vote, the motion carried 4-1, Supervisor Christy voted "Nay."

37. **The Effects of H.R.1 ("One Big Beautiful Bill Act") on Refugee Communities in Pima County**

Discussion/Direction/Action: Inviting Aaron Rippenkroeger, Melanie Reyes, and Meheria Habibi, International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Arizona, and Connie Phillips and Amelia Smith of Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, to present to the Board of Supervisors about the effects of the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," H.R.1, on refugee communities resettled here in Pima County and Arizona - including the imminent loss of supplemental nutrition benefits (SNAP) for which refugee communities have historically always been eligible. Historically speaking, supporting refugee resettlement in the United States has always been a bipartisan issue. (District 2)

(Clerk's Note: See the attached verbatim related to this item.)

This item was for discussion only. No Board action was taken.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD**

38. **Avra Valley Irrigation and Drainage District Annual Election Cancellation**

Discussion/action regarding a request, pursuant to A.R.S. §16-410(A), to cancel the annual election of the Board of Directors of the Avra Valley Irrigation and Drainage District and appoint John Kai, Jr., as Director of Division III of the Avra Valley Irrigation and Drainage District, to serve a three-year term, effective January 1, 2026.

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

**REGIONAL WASTEWATER RECLAMATION**

39. **Pretreatment Settlement Agreement**

Staff recommends approval of the following proposed Pretreatment Settlement Agreement, RWRD Enterprise Fund:



Busy D Pumping. The proposed settlement amount of \$31,000.00 is in accordance with the Industrial Wastewater Enforcement Response Plan.

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

## **CONTRACT AND AWARD**

### **PROCUREMENT**

40. Southern Arizona Paving & Construction, Co. (Headquarters: Tucson, AZ), to provide for the Esperero Wash at Sunrise Drive Culvert Replacement Project, term date 10/21/25 to 9/30/26, Transportation Capital Projects Fund, contract amount \$2,883,544.00 (PO2500031897) Administering Department: Project Design & Construction

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Heinz and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

### **GRANT APPLICATION/ACCEPTANCE**

41. **Acceptance – Health**

Arizona Family Health Partnership, d.b.a. Affirm Sexual and Reproductive Health, Amendment No. 3, to provide for reproductive health services, extend grant term to 9/30/25 and amend grant language, \$40,521.00/\$4,604.00 Health Special Revenue Fund match (GA-HD-69993)

It was moved by Chair Scott and seconded by Supervisor Cano to approve the item. No vote was taken at this time.

Supervisor Christy inquired about the timeline for this item and the reason for its extension.

Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator, stated that the grant was extended by 30 days due to changes in unduplicated services of clients, which increased the award amount.

Supervisor Christy asked whether the funding for this grant was under review by the current administration.

Mr. Holmes responded that this was one of the many health grants that were paused and reviewed by the current administration and were resubmitted for the County. He stated that this was the last of the funding source through September 2025.

Upon the vote, the motion carried 4-1, Supervisor Christy voted "Nay."

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

### **42. Approval of the Consent Calendar**

It was moved by Chair Scott, seconded by Supervisor Cano and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the Consent Calendar in its entirety.

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## **BOARD, COMMISSION AND/OR COMMITTEE**

### **1. Workforce Investment Board**

Reappointments of the following members: Term expirations: 9/30/28. (Staff recommendations)

- Aric Meares, Laura Oldaker, Irisbeth "Iris" Matheny, James "Jim" Zarling, Ramon Serrato, and Jordan Utley, representing Business.
- Karen King, representing Workforce; Labor Org. Representative nominated by Local Labor Federation.
- Paul Stapleton-Smith, representing Workforce; Labor Org, or Joint Labor Management Apprenticeship Program.
- Frank Grijalva, representing Workforce; Labor Org. and Joint Labor Management.
- Laurie Kierstead-Joseph, representing Education and Training, Title II Adult Education and Literacy.
- Ian Roark, representing Education and Training; Higher Education.

### **2. Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission**

Pursuant to amendment of Chapter 18, Zoning, appointments of members to the following professional positions: Term expirations: 12/31/28. (Staff recommendations)

- Savannah McDonald, representing Architect.
- Dr. Teresita Majewski, representing Archaeologist.
- Kenneth Scoville, representing Architectural Historian.
- Joel Ireland, representing Historic Residential and Commercial Property Development.
- Jessica Bassi, representing Landscape Architect.

## **FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **3. Duplicate Warrants - For Ratification**

Christopher Daniel Carreon \$60.00; Saul Lugo \$1,300.00; Pine Tree Apts \$837.00; San Felipe Apartments \$2,775.00; Catalina Ridge Apartments \$1,186.00; Law Office of Cornelia W. Honchar \$14,054.28; Yanal Issac \$1,200.00; Mission Vista Apartments \$3,443.00; Kurt Brei \$111.33; The State of Arizona \$374.00; Cirrus Visual Communication \$567.38; The Crossing on Grande \$959.00; Rachel M. Esparza \$550.00; Nationwide Retirement

Solutions \$17,742.74; The Quail Canyon Homeowners Master Association C/O Cadden Community Mgmt. \$219.05; Sally Rieger \$20.00; Natalya L. Killpack \$550.00; Endress + Hauser, Inc., \$10,027.65; West Publishing Corporation \$530.78; Empire Management \$1,457.50; Angela Solis Design Studio \$920.00; Martina Soto \$550.00; American Solutions Forms, Inc. \$6,178.26; Stephen Dobbertin \$185.00; Hale International Recruitment US, L.L.C. \$30,400.00; Arizona Dept. of Emergency and Military Affairs \$34,569.90; Burkert Fluid Control Systems \$2,960.52; Palomino Crossing Apartments \$1,049.00; Damoui Law Offices, P.L.L.C. \$1,186.00; Villas Los Duraznos, L.L.C. \$1,363.90; Erika Samantha Duarte \$200.00.

**RATIFY AND/OR APPROVE**

4. Minutes: August 27, 2025

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43. **ADJOURNMENT**

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

### 12. Climate Action Plan for County Operations 2025-2030

Staff recommends approval of the proposed Climate Action Plan for County Operations for 2025-2030.

Verbatim

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S: Chair Scott  
JA: Supervisor Allen  
SC: Supervisor Christy  
AC: Supervisor Cano  
JL: Jan Leshner, County Administrator  
SB: Sam E. Brown, Chief Civil Deputy County Attorney  
SD: Sarah Davis, Senior Advisor to the County Administrator

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RS: Ms. Davis, so gracious of you to give your place in line to Mr. Cuaron.

JL: We are going to start with me, if I could, sir?

RS: Oh, yes, madam. Excuse me, I apologize.

JL: Well, no, I just want to introduce this, if I may, because I think this truly is the last but not least. What you have before you today, when we look at the PimaCAN, or our action plan, is the result of over two years of work representing about 30 different departments, some 50 individuals representing, not only directors, but people within all the departments who serve not only on the Board but on the Technical Advisory Group. So in addition to those 50 staff, we saw the Green Stewards involved, which represents the community as well. There was active partnerships with all of our jurisdictional partners and so what you are looking at is the result of, as I say, several years of work with many partners within the community. And I think what we look at, as we begin to define the Pima CAN Plan, is it is one of the foundational documents that we use as we build next year's budgets, and that as we build the budgets, because you will see, as an example, we have in the past talked about things like LED lighting, and then you will see those come to fruition when we bring the capital improvement budgets before you next year so that you can see how it connects. So again, it is one of the core documents about which we reflect and refer when we build the budgets. But huge thanks to Ms. Davis and the 30 departments and all the Technical Advisory Committee who did this incredible work. So thank you for allowing me a bit of an introduction.

RS: Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Davis.

SD: Chair Scott, members of the Board, Administrator Leshner. Thank you for the amazing and kind words to kick us off, and Director Cuaron, thank you for framing this with a financial update first, a very active participant in our climate work. Chair

Scott, members of the Board, Administrator Leshner, we will jump to the first slide, please. It is an absolute honor to be with you here today to present for consideration the 2025 to 2030 Climate Action Plan for County Operations, the CAPCO. This plan builds upon priority areas of its predecessor, the Sustainable Action Plan for County Operations, otherwise known as the SAPCO, but incorporates robust adaptation priorities and climate resilience to its mitigation goals and strategies. This plan is part of a broader umbrella, as you can see on our logo or graphic rather, adjacent to the Pima County logo, that this will all be a broader initiative called Pima Climate Action Now, this is representative of the county's initiatives that aim to reduce the impacts of climate change, build community resilience, and adapt to both current and future climate impacts. The collaboration across County departments and with our regional partners ensure that all of these climate and sustainability priority areas become integrated into our planning, our policies and very specific to this discussion today, our operations. The plan before you for consideration is representative, as Ms. Leshner said, of the County's commitment to advancing sustainability, environmental stewardship and be a really strong and accountable community partner and leader in this space. The design and format of this plan is intended to be adaptive, malleable, and intended to engage and be evaluative. The chapters herein are a result of substantial qualitative and quantitative feedback from County departments, public priorities from our community and our regional, jurisdictional, tribal, and community partners. This plan aligns with the recently Board adopted ten-year comprehensive plan, Pima Prospers, the Prosperity Initiative, the Integrated Infrastructure Plan, and build upon the successes from the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and the SAPCO. Next slide please. Before we get started on the plan, I really want to underscore the importance of the Pima County Board of Supervisors and County leadership commitment to advancing our climate and sustainability work. The Pima County Board of Supervisors over recent years have approved and championed four Board of Supervisors resolutions, committing the County to its alignment with carbon mitigation, net zero goals and measurements, and enhancing the Sustainable Action Plan into our Climate Action Plan for County Operations, which is represented in 2022-25 and the most recently approved Board of Supervisors Resolution 2025-11, which sets the framework and the priorities for the plan you are considering today. In addition, the Board has adopted several proclamations for heat awareness, wildfire preparedness, water and last summer adopted the first County Heat Ordinance for Workforce Protections. Notably, each subsequent resolution grows the commitment, scope, and breadth of the County's work, building upon the successes achieved and pivoting to respond to emerging climate priorities. These commitments enhance our ability to do the work during uncertain times, funding limitations, or other policy barriers. The most recent resolution directives are representative of that framework, augmenting our ability to adapt to climate risks, build resilience, and increase our carbon mitigation goals to reduce our County operations carbon emissions by 60% from 2021 levels. Next slide please. We will start with carbon. But a few words to kind of frame this approach. Pima County has committed to a carbon reduction strategy to achieve a net zero goal by 2050. This is framed in part by the Regional Priority Climate Action Plan effort and the coalition partners. This is reflected in our plan to have the County commit to those regional goals of carbon emissions reductions and be an

active partner in this work. As a framing, a reminder the Regional Priority Climate Action Plan and the upcoming Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, a result of planning funds received by the County from the Environmental Protection Agency, solicited ample public feedback, including but not limited to, community based organizations, public listening sessions, partners, programs, youth organizations representing vulnerable and disproportionately affected community members, and many community based organizations. This public feedback gathering helped frame the community priorities and set forth the regional effort in a comprehensive regional carbon emissions strategy. This plan, connectivity, represents the County aligning with and holding itself accountable to those operational strategies that will drive us all to net zero. This slide represents the actual carbon emissions from 2021. The right side is the regional emissions inventory and the left side is the County's emissions inventory. Previously the SAPCO, we only included Pima County Facilities, Regional Wastewater Reclamation and Fleet. As we see on the right side, transportation is the largest source of regional emissions, so we are now connecting to that by including our own commuter emissions estimates. We close out the SAPCO at just over 69,000 metric tons of carbon emissions, with a previous 2030 goal of 53,000 metric tons of carbon emissions reduction. With this plan, and including commuter emissions, County Facility, Wastewater and Fleet, that goal becomes further reduced to 46,000 metric tons. If we only measure County Facilities, Wastewater and Fleet, that is 38,000 metric tons of carbon emissions. That being said, we are finalizing our Travel Reduction Program Survey this month. If you have not taken it, please do, because we are using that data to inform our strategies on how to further reduce our commuter emissions. So, we are actively still collecting data to inform a completely new measure in our carbon emissions inventory for year two. Next slide please. The subsequent chapters of this operational plan are reflective of community climate priorities and response to climate risk. The Waste and Materials chapter retains our commitment to use recycled materials for offices but also augments our ability to explore sustainable items across our operations. One really innovative example of that is using soy-based tires for fleet. This also kind of enables us to grow our operations on how to be creatively engaged on how to integrate new sustainable items but reduce our tonnage of solid waste in the landfill, enhance our recycling programs and recycling waste education opportunities. From there, we will move from mitigation into adaptation. And we are going to talk about some of the really exciting changes we have made to better adapt and provide critical resources to our community in the face of rising temperatures, wildfire risk. During the SAPCO period, which was 2018 through 2024, in the most recent iteration, the region saw three of the hottest summers on record. Each subsequent record breaking summer, eclipsing the one prior. One year ago, the second meeting of October, I presented our first update on climate to this Board, and we were counting continued 100 degree days in 2024, of which we had 112. Over the recent six years, we have had an average annual increase of 100 plus degree temperatures of seven days, and over the period, we have seen an increase of how we measure summer, which now includes April to October. Our heat relief efforts are robust, and our Public Health Department is leading these efforts. Similar to the regional carbon planning effort, this also represents a regional partnership. What is put into our County operations plan are

the County roles. So, our heat relief efforts, and what you will see in this plan, is the County operational commitment to bolster our cooling center network, which served thousands over the recent two years, many of which were our vulnerable community members. Similarly, the County adopted an administrative procedure for Heat, Workforce Safety and Training and a heat safety ordinance for our contracted workforce. These two policies were informed by substantial listening sessions with labor unions, chambers of commerce, small business community, and over 1,500 responses to a County wide survey on heat risks in our own workforce. We will be evaluating these policies and workforce safety and finally committing some of our shared goals in our Water and Landscapes chapter to augment green infrastructure projects and investments in priority and heat priority areas. Recently, the Board adopted the Wildfire Mitigation Plan. In the SAPCO, we had a component of landscapes dedicated to the removal and remediation of invasive species and prior to the Wildfire Mitigation Plan adoption, a working group within the Climate Action Team provided an action strategy to inform the mitigation of wildfire risk and growth of invasive species work. The operational commitment to those strategies now within the Wildfire Mitigation Plan will be actioned through this plan, specifically towards invasive species. We plan to develop an administrative procedure for invasive species remediation across our County departments, enhanced GIS tracking and risk to inform the broader community and the Wildfire Protection Plan, and finally, seek to bolster our communications efforts on our mitigation and safety efforts. Next slide please. Water is an essential priority and a driving component of this plan. In the CAPCO, our water section has grown exponentially and is overseen by our Water Working Group. There are four core components to this chapter. First, to augment our water supply. Second, promote sustainable use of effluent. Third, water demand management across our County facilities operations and where we can in the community through partnerships and finally promoting water sustainability and innovation across our landscapes, green infrastructure and shared use spaces. Pertaining to water supply, there are components within this plan to increase our acreage of stormwater parks, modify our detention basins for enhanced recharge, monitor and grow stormwater collection efforts. For these efforts, we will be building from the Regional Flood Control District data tool to identify priority areas and implementation strategies, timelines and partnerships. We are actively shifting many of our green spaces to effluent and have a goal to continue converting our parks and fields to effluent, which will require some investment in some aging infrastructure and align with some of the work that our Parks and Recreation Department is doing in their strategic planning. We will continue to use our integrated infrastructure plan to realize successes in this conversion and look where budget opportunities can direct efforts in our water work. Water demand priorities are geared specifically towards our County facilities and a full inventory of our fixtures and equipment. However, it also includes an opportunity for us to think regionally about high demand water use and connect to our Economic Development Environmental Review Board policy approved by the Board and our Pima Prosper's water chapter. This plan also bridges in a component of resilience landscapes as a connective climate resilience priority to water landscapes. This is the next chapter. Landscapes builds upon the investment and the true success of our Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, and the

predecessor SAPCO document. This chapter underscores our conservation acreage goal to plant at least 10,000 trees, invest in green infrastructure to promote water supply food systems and propose using our Native Seeds Program and water resilient plants to invest in increased acreage of green spaces, green infrastructure across our County facilities as well. We are actively revisiting our food systems work and have a goal to set food systems framework by year two, including opportunities at our farmland such as Buckelew farms, working ranches and food policy work happening across our community. The final chapter is called Climate and Community. Incorporated here almost as a lens by which we are always considering our climate work, public health, economic vitality and workforce are three priority areas that ensure this work embodies the public's wellbeing, engagement and connectivity to this plan. Climate work is inextricably linked to public health. Our public Health Department is an active participant in our climate work and oversee our heat relief efforts, but we would like to continue to grow that connection, connecting our public health role and epidemiology, qualified census tract data, health data and the community health needs assessment on how to inform how and where we prioritize climate investment. The Board championed and adopted Board of Supervisors policy to enhance our due diligence in environmental reviews for economic development projects. In support of this policy, the CAPCO seeks to connect to it and help to evaluate from those reviews to where are we determining risks, where are we creating action opportunities and priority areas on things that impact emissions, water or our natural spaces. Workforce is a core component to the regional plan and our operational plan, growing opportunities to fortify the workforce pipeline through our CWD programming and our green stewards. As Ms. Leshner highlighted earlier, how do we provide content, training and relevant information to our Pima County workforce and get them engaged in the work that we are doing? Next slide please. This is a very exciting slide. This plan is not intended to live as a printed document that just gets updated annually. We have created a far more engaging opportunity, and it is meant to engage, grow and continue to respond to climate priorities across the County and the community. We intend to kind of realize this in two ways. First, the recent Board of Supervisors resolution underscores regular updates to the Pima County Board of Supervisors. We envision that this Board gets subject specific updates to each chapter, including status metrics and evaluative pivots, if and where appropriate. This framework enables the Board to receive subject specific updates on a planned timeline. So, if I am here every two months, you know that February is carbon and energy, and you know that March is going to be the water discussion. And ways to really dig into these topics deeply and have dynamic conversations, get regular data updates so that you do not have to wait a year for an annual report. The second way is, and I want to give a very, very big shoutout to our Pima County web team and our Communications Department. They have developed an exceptional website that will serve as our climate hub. It enables the public to connect with our climate work, get critical resource links such as cooling center network maps, utility assistance program information, and engage in a Buffelgrass pool, to name a few. But it also allows, you cannot see very well but at the top there, is a link to our climate plan and you can dig into each of these chapters subject by subject, so that you can really dig in, not look at this as a document in as a whole, but you can look at it as a



commitment of its parts. The website demonstrates our commitment to engagement, feedback and evaluative growth of our plan. We hope that this will be used as a tool once we start evaluating the plan and getting our metrics that this can be a landing spot to continue to bolster our accountability in this space where we can report our successes as we go through this journey. Next slide please. This is, in my opinion, the most important slide of the whole presentation, and arguably as important as the plan itself, this plan is a document that embodies two years' worth of work and many years prior to that, but a collaboration of over 25 County departments, directors, subject matter experts, liaisons, champions, central services and really demonstrates an enterprise-wide approach. There are, as Ms. Leshner said, over 50 County employees that engage month over month as we comb through all of these priorities, take the public feedback that we have solicited and figure out ways to incorporate it into our County operations. Over the past two years, these climate team members have actively engaged in substantial feedback gathering, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, all of which informed critical and dynamic discussions and all of the aforementioned have transformed the priorities, chapters, strategies, and goals within the plan you are considering today. This plan is a true representation of our Pima County operations, employees, and is set in a framework for feasibility. The County has a long history of conservation, sustainability, and climate work, and this plan is a new beginning for the upcoming five years, and we look forward to feedback from the Pima County Board of Supervisors on the plan and its potential adoption. Thank you.

RS: Thank you, Ms. Davis, very much for that comprehensive presentation. As always, the Board appreciated getting the slides prior to the presentation, as well as the other supporting materials. Questions or comments from Board members? Supervisor Allen?

JA: So first of all, thank you, Director Davis for all of the work and the leadership in bringing the department together. I think everything that Administrator Leshner had commented shared initially around the process that has been brought this all together. It has been a really helpful and you have been very helpful for keeping us up to date and sharing information with us. So I just wanted to say a big kudos for that. A few of the highlights that I think are just things that I really want to emphasize that I appreciate. And I think I said this maybe at one of the previous updates, but the framework around mitigation, adaptation and resiliency, as well as kind of the subcategories that have been built in, I think are both comprehensive and robust. I also really appreciate the commuter emissions by County employees that has been integrated in. But given the size of our workforce, it is substantive. I mean, this is such an important document, and the Board has had a week to dig into it and it was a week that followed, we had another Board meeting right before this. So, I do have a lot of things that I have structured chapter by chapter around questions and some recommendations. It is robust, so I would actually like to put on the table, for my colleagues. I am happy to go through those from the dais but I would also ask whether or not my colleagues would consider that we continue this item and bring it back up as early as November 4th, but no later than December 2nd, so that we have got more time to kind of dig in and have conversations with you about some of the questions and recommendations and what is feasible, etcetera.

SC: Is that a form of a motion?

JA: It was not, but it could be. I would like to make the motion that we would continue this item until the December 2nd meeting, so that we could have a lot more robust conversation and feedback.

SC: Would the Supervisor accept a friendly amendment to it?

JA: Maybe.

AC: I will second for December 2nd and I would like to continue the discussion as well.

RS: Moved and seconded to continue the item to December 2nd, but discussion on the motion.

SC: Mr. Chair, yes, and I would just ask that in that discussion of tabling it for the December 2nd meeting, or is that the one? That in that discussion we include a projected cost and accumulated cost of what this whole plan has generated so far? There is a lot of comprehensive materials here, a lot of implementation of infrastructure, a lot of redistribution of a number of departments and activities. All of these come with a price tag. If you could provide us with what you estimate that price tag to be, I would certainly support Supervisor Allen's motion.

AC: Chair Scott?

RS: Sir?

AC: I am not certain if we are following proper parliamentary procedure here. This Supervisor, my colleague from District 4, his comments were supposed to be on the motion. So, am I allowed to explain kind of what I am hoping to see for December? Or are we just going to, how are we going to, how do you want me to do this?

RS: We are discussing...the discussion is on the motion to continue the item.

AC: Okay.

RS: So if you are wanting to discuss what you are hoping to see on that day or discuss on that day, I think that is in line. Am I off the mark there, Mr. Brown?

SB: That is correct and if you have an objection to the motion, you can speak to that too.

RS: Okay.

AC: Okay, so I am going to take the opportunity to give District 5's input. Ms. Davis, I want to say I am so grateful for your work as well. I know that this has been a herculean effort for you to put that incredible group of folks in one room figuring out how we have got to go. I appreciate you mentioning your presentation last year to the Board. As you know, I am new to the Board, and I looked while you were offering your remarks to us on your October 2024 report and learned a new

acronym, Sustainable Action Plan for County Operations. Essentially, everything that I see in that October report, I want to see transferred to the PimaCAN Plan, more specific with the data and the metrics that are included in that version what I do not see in the proposal before the Board today. I think the plan lacks a timeline, a clear timeline and sequence of actions. We need to know what happens in year one versus year five and who is accountable for that. I want to echo the comments about cost estimates and funding sources. The Board should understand how this aligns with our budget, with our capital plan. And I love that Procurement was mentioned in the proposal that you sent to us, because that is one example of how we can really operationalize this. On capital improvement projects like building retrofits, water recharge, green infrastructure, all of those are going to require significant resources, and we need to see how these fit within our existing capital pipeline and what we can do to support and incentivize departments doing this work. I think that is what is going to really put this on turbochargers when you have got the departments seeing that they have a concrete role in Pima CAN that can then be that that will essentially allow them to come to the top of the list when they are coming for, I do not know, supplementals or some of those kinds of discussions to operationalize this. And lastly, on accountability and data, I would like to see a defined governance structure, annual reporting and a clear system for tracking results, especially greenhouse gas reductions and other key outcomes. I love what we can do with real time aggregation, as was mentioned in your remarks, and allowing the County taxpayer to be able to see what this investment means. I think that is going to take this incredible plan to a new level. I support this plan. I am excited about having a continued discussion with the County Administrator and with Ms. Davis about this, and just want to, of course, applaud all of your work. Nobody is really doing this anymore at the federal level and certainly not at the state level. And so I recognize the herculean effort that this is, and I look forward to District 5 working with you, Ms. Davis, on this plan. So I appreciate you.

RS: Thank you, Supervisor Cano. Any other comments discussion on the motion to continue to December 2nd? All those in favor indicate by saying "Aye." Aye.

JA: Aye.

AC: Aye.

SC: Aye.

MH: Aye.

RS: Any opposed? Item passes 5-0.

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

### 37. The Effects of H.R.1 (“One Big Beautiful Bill Act”) on Refugee Communities in Pima County

Discussion/Direction/Action: Inviting Aaron Rippenkroeger, Melanie Reyes, and Meheria Habibi, International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Arizona, and Connie Phillips and Amelia Smith of Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, to present to the Board of Supervisors about the effects of the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” H.R.1, on refugee communities resettled here in Pima County and Arizona - including the imminent loss of supplemental nutrition benefits (SNAP) for which refugee communities have historically always been eligible. Historically speaking, supporting refugee resettlement in the United States has always been a bipartisan issue. (District 2)

#### Verbatim

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RS: Chair Scott  
MH: Supervisor Heinz  
JA: Supervisor Allen  
AC: Supervisor Cano  
AR: Aaron Rippenkroeger, Director, IRC  
AS: Amelia Smith, Resettlement Director, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest  
MH: Meheria Habibi, Deputy Director, IRC  
SA: Sumaiyah Ahmed, Client of the IRC

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RS: We have a time certain item. This is Addendum Item No. 6, the Effects of H.R.1 (“One Big Beautiful Bill Act”) on Refugee Communities in Pima County. This was put on the addendum by Supervisor Heinz and my understanding is that we have guest speakers that have been invited by our colleague. Supervisor Heinz?

MGH: Thank you Chair Scott and thank you all for being here. This is something that I recently became aware of thanks to the so-called “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”. Food, literally food for those who have most recently arrived in our country who have been granted refugee status, food assistance will be ending as soon as November 1st. This is catastrophic. I do not even think the state has clearly identified how this is going to be rolled out. This affects a significant percentage of thousands of people across the state, hundreds and hundreds in our own community here, including many children. And so, I have asked several groups to come and present IRC, as well as Lutheran Social Services and Catholic Community Services who's help in this issue, I greatly appreciate, and I would like to give the floor to them to kind of explain this dire situation for the Board and for my colleagues.

RS: Thank you, Supervisor Heinz. For our presenters, we appreciate you being here and if you could just state your name and the organizations that you are representing before you address the Board

AR: Thank you, Chairman, Supervisors, County staff, really grateful for your time today. My name is Aaron Rippenkroeger. I am the Director for the International Rescue Committee (IRC) here in Arizona, including our office here in Tucson, which was opened in 1996. The IRC is one of three federally contracted refugee resettlement agencies here in Pima County, along with Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest and Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona, who are all represented here today. Along with many other agencies that serve refugees and survivors of human trafficking and related groups in the County. We believe that there are thousands of Pima County residents who are about to be confronted with an abrupt food insecurity situation starting next month. Through no fault of their own, many of whom are children. And this is due directly to some policy changes that were included in H.R.1, which was passed on July 4th. These are refugees who have been resettled here by the U.S. government through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, which was established by Congress in 1980. Also included in this are folks who have been approved for long-term Asylum in the U.S., and also survivors of human trafficking. I want to clarify that this topic today is primarily not related to individuals that have crossed over the U.S.-Mexico border, or in the process of seeking Asylum in the U.S., here in Arizona, or traveling to other parts of the country. These are individuals who are living here long-term. They are based here, they have legal status, and they are here to stay. They are neighbors, church goers, students, teachers, caregivers, taxpayers in the County. In the handouts that we have for you today, it talks about the scale of global displacement, which is higher than it has ever been in the world. One of the U.S.'s contributions to those global challenges for many decades has been the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program that allows a modest number of refugees, determined by the President, each year to resettle in communities across the country after a year's long vetting process. Over the years, these are often individuals who are allied with the United States in some capacity, such as Vietnam or Afghanistan, and others who have fled wars or conflict from places like Ethiopia, Syria, Myanmar and others. Also, over 50% of the folks who are arriving here are usually joining family members that are already living in the area. They arrive in the U.S. with something called refugee status, and they are authorized to work on day one and with modest assistance from our organizations. Most go to work very quickly and are on the path to self-sufficiency at a remarkable pace. Unfortunately, we are seeing some hesitation among area employers due to all the changing immigration policies. But I am going to pause there and hand it over to Amilia from Lutheran Social Services to talk a little bit about what happens when they first arrive in the kitchen.

RS: Thank you sir.

AS: Good morning. My name is Amelia Smith, and I am the Resettlement Director for Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest.

RS: You can adjust the mic if you like.

AS: Okay, sorry. Thank you. I have also come out with a cold, so I apologize. So once a family is vetted to come to the United States as a refugee, they arrive in Tucson, for in our case. And what happens is, before the family ever arrives, our agencies work really hard to set up an apartment for the family, so they are welcome to a home that is furnished and welcoming for them. Our staff pick them up from the airport. It is usually the staff that will be supporting them once they resettle in the United States. And what happens is we take them to their new home, and we help orient them to their new home. So, we teach them how to use their stove, how to use their refrigerator, and who to call if they have an emergency. And then the next day, our staff return to their home to help them start the orientation process and resettlement process within their new community. Within the first week, we help the family apply for AHCCCS, their SNAP benefits and making sure that they have everything they need, along with helping ensure that the children are getting enrolled in school. Within the first 90 days, the core services include a wellness exam, making sure everyone has immunizations they need, along with a TB test. We do ongoing orientations about the culture, so from safety to medical and anything you might need to know in your new community, along with registering the adults for ESL classes through our partnership with Pima Community College, along with job readiness training. We also help kids get enrolled in school and making sure the parents know how to navigate the U.S. education system because moving to the United States, the two hardest systems to navigate are the medical and the education systems. So, our staff provide support in making sure that they know what needs to be done, making sure their children are going to school so they can be successful, along with employment assistance. So, we have employment specialists on our team who will help them navigate the employment rules of the United States and help them understand the importance of their job and how to balance their money, what their paycheck stubs mean. So, there is a lot of supports that go in within the first 90 days of a person's resettlement. Within the first six months, they are required to start paying back their travel loan. And so we help them with putting that into their budget and how to pay the travel loan back to the government, along with continuing ongoing resources and referrals to community partners, because we want people to know where to go in their community in order to receive the supports they need, along with outreach and those kinds of things. Once they have been in the United States for a year, they can apply for their green card. We also support that and we want to make sure that people are applying for their green card. After they have been here for a year, this bill could prevent people, if they do not have their green card, from being able to access benefits. And so we want to make sure that we are supporting people to do that too, throughout our agencies. And then once they have been here for five years, they can start the citizen process. Thank you.

RS: Thank you.

AR: Just one more quick word from my part is that, again, authorized to work on day one. That does not go away. They do not even really need an employment

authorization document. They have a Social Security Number and are major contributors to our economy. One of the slides you will see here talks about job placements that play a really important role in our local workforce. Again, paying taxes, starting businesses, really significant contributions to our community in many respects. And then just to emphasize what Amelia said, they have a standard path, that at one year, they can apply to receive a green card and legal permanent residence, and at five years they can apply for citizenship. So, they are on that pathway automatically. Unfortunately, some of the changes in H.R.1 are going to remove some of the aspects of the support system that they have had before they achieved that legal permanent residence, which can take up to 12 months or more once they have submitted that application. So approximately two plus years after they have arrived in the country. I will hand it to Meheria.

MH: Good morning Supervisors and Chair Scott. My name is Meheria Habibi. I am the Deputy Director of programs with the IRC. I arrived in Tucson, Arizona over 24 years ago. I was one of the refugees that had that opportunity to call Pima County home. I want to talk to you about a number of executive orders that were signed that directly impact our communities that we work with. On January 20th and onward, there were a series of executive orders that were signed that both impacted individuals that were ready to arrive here in the United States, but also those that had already arrived. And that included a stop work order that resettlement agencies received on January 24th, which really limited us to not being able to provide support and services for those that had already been admitted through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. So, we had to piece together resources to be able to support them. On July 4th, when "One Big, Beautiful Bill" was signed, it directly impacts our clients with regard to many public benefits that they were eligible for before, or they have been eligible so far, and that included SNAP cuts, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps. They are not going to be eligible for that anymore. The report that you see in front of you which is the ORR, Office of Refugee Resettlement Program, which sits under the Department of Health and Human Services, those are all the individuals that are eligible for these services. All of those refugees are going to be the most impacted with SNAP as a first step. Once the H.R.1 was signed, states had four months to implement that. The state of Arizona is still analyzing that information, but what we have heard from them verbally, is that, that policy is going to go into effect on November 1st. So, there were two parts to that, one that terminates eligibility for those that have come through the U.S. Refugee Admissions program, which now we know is going into effect on November 1st, which we are estimating in Pima County, will impact around 1,700 individuals. And this includes those refugees that are still within that one-year time limit, that they have arrived here and are not eligible to submit for that legal permanent residence, which is the green card application, which will reinstate their eligibility after they have obtained it. And Amelia alluded to that, that it takes an average of 12.5 months for that application to be adjudicated. And then the other part of that is, the able-bodied working adults that impacts everyone that is receiving SNAP benefits, and that includes changing the age limits from what was applicable before from 18 to 54. Now that age limit is 14 to 64, which means that anyone who is receiving SNAP benefits and that includes U.S. citizens, those that are with legal

permanent residents, and we are talking about mothers that are caring for their children, if they do not have children under the age of 14, they will have to participate. They have to work at least 80 hours a month in order for them to be eligible to continue to receive those benefits. There are a few exceptions, but there is not a whole lot. SNAP benefits is the start of this. There are going to be other benefits that are going to be impacted. For example, Medicaid is going to be cut starting October of 2026. We are talking about families with children that are going to lose their benefits within a few days now. We have been asking for information and trying to help prepare our communities for this, and unfortunately, we do not have any policies that have been rolled out yet. Some of these notices that we have, for example, the able-bodied working adults without dependents policy was rolled out through notices that have gone out to those that are receiving SNAP benefits. So, we are here to inform you and inform the community about these changes that are coming, and that it will have a significant impact on our communities and those that are just starting their life here. And we are talking about single parents and families that are working but because of rising cost of housing and inflation, they really need that little bit of support so that they can get going in that first year. And to give you an example, I would like to invite one of our clients, Sumaiyah Ahmed, here to share her story with you. Thank you so much.

RS: Thank you.

SA: Good morning and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. My name is Sumaiyah Ahmed from Somalia. I come here as a refugee looking for safety and better opportunities in life. When me and my family first arrived in the United States, we came with hope, but with many challenges. Everything was new, the language and the system even had AHCCCS, food and healthcare during that difficult time. The SNAP program, what many calls the food stamp, was the first form of support that helped us survive. SNAP made sure there was food on our table when we were learning how to navigate life in here. It gave us the ability and dignity. It allowed us to focus on getting jobs and going to schools and building new lives here, instead of worrying about what might be on the table. Many families right now are worried. Just uncertain because of stress and anxiety. Refugees who are still adjusting life here do not often understand what shutdown means. They just hear rumors that SNAP is delayed or stopped, and that could impact on refugee households and families with limited income or saving. Many children, peoples and single parents and big families like mine are going to get effected. Many refugee families SNAP is not luxury, it is ability to self-sufficiency. Thank you very much.

RS: Thank you. I really want to thank all of you for your presentation. I want to also thank my colleague for putting this item on the addendum so that we could have a public discussion of the impact of H.R.1 on people who are in our country legally and are seeking citizenship status. Prior to serving on the Board, I was an educator in our public schools, including five years as the principal at a high school that had over 40 languages and dialects represented on the campus, and that school was oftentimes not just the first American school for our students, but their first school ever. If they had not had any opportunity for formal schooling in their home country.



Appreciate what you said about how the education system and the health system is often the most difficult for our children and parents of political and economic refugees to navigate. And I am grateful for the work of agencies such as yours to help people to navigate those processes and everything else that they encounter when they come to the United States. Supervisor Heinz, any other comments that you wanted to make?

MGH: No. I would like to echo the Chair and thank you for taking the time to be here. And I know that I would just like to summarize what you said in a little bit more direct way. The Trump administration is intentionally starving refugees and their children, and that cannot be tolerated. So, thank you for being here.

RS: Thank you Supervisor Heinz. Any other questions or comments from Board members? Alright. Thank you all very much. We are going to go

[Supervisor Allen raised her hand.]

RS: Oh, I am sorry, Supervisor Allen, I apologize. Go ahead.

JA: I also wanted to thank you all for coming and well, first and foremost, for the work that you do. I think refugee communities are often hidden from our community. So, the work that you do to help transition folks in, get acclimated, to get used to the systems and the processes and procedures is so incredibly important. I cannot imagine the amount of uncertainty and the stress and the strain that it is to land in a new country with, you know what, all the stuff that you are bringing with you and to be able to become part of Tucson. And I am proud that Tucson is a community that welcomes refugees. What I am not proud of is that we have a country, and I keep thinking about this comparison, when we have been talking with people come to our office or just out on the streets and at events, who are struggling right now from the impacts of an Administration that is literally taking food benefits away from people. We have been dealing with it with a number of seniors programs. We have been talking with you all about the impact on the refugee community. And then contrasting that with, where money is going, and the focus on \$70 billion going into immigration enforcement efforts, while, at the other hand, is taking money away and essential programs and services and food from families here, it is unacceptable. So, I thank you. Thank you for coming to us and making sure that we understand what is going on. So, for that leadership that every one of you are bringing to the table here today and every day. So, thank you.

RS: Thank you. Supervisor. Supervisor Cano?

AC: I want to echo the comments of my colleagues and want to thank the IRC for meeting with me in my office twice on this very important issue. It is clear to me that we have a responsibility as a County to be a partner in these efforts. Phoenix and Washington will not be sending assistance. They are tearing apart our families left and right. And I, too, share the deep concerns about the role that this Administration has already played on hurting the most vulnerable of our communities. I want to

thank, I did not get your name. I am so sorry, but I want to thank...What was your name?

[Inaudible reply from audience]

AC: Thank you, Sumaiyah for your bold words. We are here with you, and I am super grateful that you had the courage to tell us your story. And I hope that you continue to love this community because you are one of us and we are so grateful for you being here. I want to thank our County Administrator for her continued due diligence on ensuring that our community workforce development teams pay close attention to this issue. November 1st is around the corner, and we have got to be tracking the impact of this horrendous bill on our community. We have a lot of need coming our way. We have the Women, Infants and Children benefits also about to expire. We have got some more information on that. Humanity seems to be lost right now with this Trump Administration, and the County is going to continue to be here to be able to focus on where we can get those dollars, where we need them most. So, thank you, appreciate you.

RS: Thank you Supervisor. Thank you again to our guests for your time and your commitment.