

Final Copy
Torrance County Board of Commissioners
Special Commission Meeting
February 16, 2017

Commissioners Present: **Julia DuCharme-Member**
 James Frost-Member
 Javier Sanchez- Chair

Others Present: **Dennis Wallin- County Attorney**
 Michelle Jones –Clerk Admin. Assist. III
 Gene Winn- TC Extension Office- Moderator
 Linda Jaramillo- County Clerk- Moderator

Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Sanchez calls the meeting to order at 6:05pm. He thanks everyone present for their attendance and participation.

Action Items

Items to Be Considered and Acted Upon

Per the agenda:

Public Forum

Introduction of Torrance County Manager Candidates/Applicants

As part of our efforts to keep residents, business owners, and other members of the public informed and involved in County affairs, the Torrance County Commission is seeking written questions for Torrance County Manager applicants. Torrance County reserves the right to reject or revise any questions presented if deemed inappropriate. If you cannot be present you may email you questions and/or comments to larchuleta@tcnm.us, or hand deliver them to Room 24 in the County Administrative Offices at 205 9th Street, Estancia.

Chairman Sanchez explains how we will proceed with this evening's Public Forum. Present at this evening's Forum are our 5 County Manager applicants, our Board of County Commissioners, our County Attorney, the minutes taker, and our moderators. Members of the public and some County employees are also in attendance in the audience.

Written questions will be gathered from the audience and given to Mr. Wallin, our County Attorney. Mr. Wallin will review the questions to make sure that they are in accordance with our rules and regulations. Reviewed and approved questions will be given to our Moderator who will read the questions to the panel of applicants. Each applicant will be given 1 minute to reply to each question.

At this time each applicant introduces themselves to all present. The applicants are:

- Ms. Annette Ortiz, TC Interim County Manager
- Ms. Belinda Garland, NM Gaming Control Board associate
- Mr. Joseph Kasuboski, NM State Parks North East Regional Manager
- Mr. Brad Hill, NM Office of the Attorney General associate
- Mr. Mike Anaya, former Santa Fe County Commissioner

Mr. Gene Winn begins asking the applicants questions. Each applicant answers the following questions that were submitted:

1. What do you feel are the County's two most problematic issues that need to be addresses and resolved during your first year as County Manager?
2. What skills have you acquired throughout your professional career that you feel may be utilized as County Manager?
3. How important do you feel boosting morale is for Torrance County Employees in an effort to accomplish a high level of quality in performance of duties, willingness to serve the public and supporting our elected and appointed officials?
4. How would you move Torrance County forward with improving roads, increasing law enforcement personnel, and acquiring full-time paid fire department personnel?
5. a) What experience do you have with CDBG Grants?
b) Would you be willing to apply for, and administer, the grant funds for the county?

Background: Torrance County is a Joint Powers Agreement member of the EVSWA. The EVSWA owns and operates the regional landfill for central New Mexico. The landfill is in Torrance County, east of Moriarty. EVSWA also operates the eight solid waste collection stations throughout Torrance County for use by residents of the county.

Several years ago, the Torrance County Manager obtained a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG Grant) for landfill cell construction. The cell was completed and is currently in use. The current landfill cell is nearing its capacity and a new cell will be required in about three years.

All landfill customers, including Torrance County, pay a landfill tipping fee on their amount of solid waste disposed of at the landfill. However, the EVSWA Board of Directors has indicated that it may be willing to waive the landfill tipping fee up to the amount of the CDBG Grant obtained by Torrance County for construction of a new cell. A CDBG Grant in the amount of \$500,000 would cover about four years of Torrance County Tipping fees.

6. What is your view regarding nepotism and how does a governmental entity with a small population deal with it?
7. The County Manager's position is an at-will appointment by the Commissioners. Would you be willing to entertain an agreement in your contract that excludes a possibility of litigation in case of your dismissal or resignation?
8. What are your thoughts on accountability and transparency for the citizens of this County?
9. Given the position of County Manager, what do you feel is the biggest challenge facing the relationship between the County Commission and County manager; with that, if you do not care for a Commissioner's personality or position on an issue, how will you conduct yourself?
10. A high priority for the County is the maintenance and improvement of County roads. What ideas do you have to improve this vital infrastructure? Would you include stakeholder (citizen) input to prioritize the roads to be improved?

At this time, Ms. Linda Jaramillo, County Clerk, takes over the role as moderator and asks the applicants the following questions:

11. How do you feel about the grant funded programs under the County umbrella?
12. Are you willing to relocate if the job demands make it necessary?

13. What do you anticipate your relationship with Elected Officials and their staff will be?

14. What are your feelings on Commercial Horticultural Operations with the harvesting of medical cannabis and the use of water quantity, including potential impairments of prior existing water uses and whether the water use is consistent with conservation and beneficial use of water and how it will effect or impact public safety, health and welfare of the County inhabitants particularly those in the vicinity of proposed water usage for such operations?

15. What is your take on the water pipelines that are being proposed and how are the people of Torrance County going to be protected of their wells and water tables?

16. What role do you see County local government playing in economic development and what economic development strategy/strategies do you think would be most effective in positively shifting the socio-economic state of the County?

17. Land grants are a big part of Torrance County; how would you improve interactions with them?

18. Currently many County employees do not receive annual reviews and all employees receive the same pay raise. Do you agree with this or would you recommend a change?

19. Torrance County's greatest assets are our people, our water, and our wind. How will you work with the Commission to protect our greatest resources?

Ms. Jaramillo thanks the applicants for their answers and states that she is glad she is not the one who has to make this decision.

Chairman Sanchez thanks the applicants, as well as the audience for their participation this evening. He states that we appreciate all the question submissions and regrets that, due to time constraints, not all of the questions that were submitted could be asked. He states that we did our best to select a wide set of issues and topics that we hope fairly represented the questions that our constituents may have.

Commissioner Frost states that we have a good cross-section of people from our County here with a lot of good questions on various issues and he thinks this Forum has been very good. He thanks our panel of applicants for their answers.


Madam Commissioner DuCharme states that she agrees with her fellow Commissioners and Ms. Jaramillo; we have great applicants and it is going to be a very difficult decision to select only one person for this position. She states that she is very excited about this Forum and thinks it is a great idea. She thanks the public for helping the Commission to see our applicants better and have a better idea about what they stand for and represent. This was a big effort and she thanks everyone who was involved in making this evening a success.

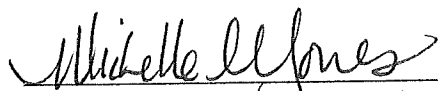
Chairman Sanchez states that he knows that this step was not necessary, but he feels that outreach to our stakeholders is something that is key. Inviting the public to participate in processes can only be a benefit.

Chairman Sanchez states that the number one thing is the public; we are always accountable to them. He reiterates to the applicants that we have a very active public in this County and this job can be likened almost to a burden; it will be a tremendous amount of responsibility and a tremendous weight will be placed on the shoulders of whoever is selected. With that, Chairman Sanchez thanks everyone again for their time and participation.

***Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm


Chairman Sanchez


Michelle Jones, Admin. Assist. III

3/8/17
Date

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