

**MINUTES  
OF THE  
LA PAZ COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
Thursday, April 29, 2021, 10:00 a.m.  
Worksession**

Chairman Minor called the April 29, 2021, workssion of the La Paz County Board of Supervisors to order at 10:10 a.m. Elected Officials and Department Heads present were: Chairman Duce Minor, Vice-Chairman Holly Irwin, Supervisor Plunkett (attending by Zoom), Chief Deputy County Attorney Dooley, IT Tech Joey Lucas, Fiduciary Vivian Hartless, Sheriff William Ponce, Human Resources Director Mary Frantz, Emergency Services Director Curtis Bagby, Public Defender Dan Terrell, Community Development Director Tonya Hoogerwerf, Parks Director Joe Picotte, Recorder Richard Garcia, and Clerk of the Board Diane Green.

***Purpose of the Worksession:***

***FY 21/22 Budget Discussion***

County Administrator Spielman stated that her "workgroup", made of up various County staff, for budget input, had met just prior to the worksession.

Karen Ziegler, finance department consultant, gave a recap of the workgroup's meeting stating that there were certain goals to meet, such as building \$1 million in positive funds each year to take care of the deficit and build that for the next five years; look at the county payroll (FTE), representing 80% of the budget; fixed costs of contracts and leases the County is obligated to pay and when they expire; and discretionary spending; all a "huge undertaking".

She stated that comments were made about mandated training, fiduciary obligations; costs that could be shifted; and a look at the justice courts. She recognized that since the majority of the budget is for salaries, this would be directly impacted; however, expressed that there were other processes that could be approached before any kind of reduction in force enacted and would be a "last resort".

County Administrator Spielman stated it was important to get feedback from the Board. She stated that she could say "with confidence" that they are united in making "meaningful changes".

Accounting Operations Manager MacFarland stated that the unfunded liability has to do with the Public Safety pension liability, which is not uncommon amongst county government; and not a short term issue.

Supervisor Plunkett expressed that an excise tax would be a suggestion to handle the pension issue.

Chairman Minor stated that there have been different conversations by all regarding the Public Safety pension; a problem not caused by La Paz County, but was handed to the counties from the State to fund. He noted that Apache County took out a bond to fund the pension.

Accounting Operations Manager MacFarland stated that Finance was able to "figure out" how payroll and other obligations could be met without touching restricted funds. He expressed that there was a "silver lining" to the County's present situation, that is, if they were very careful and thoughtful, taking action would correct the situation. He felt that was the difference from the previous financial "situation".

Discussion ensued regarding "recovery act" monies and how guidance has not yet been given from the State on how it could be used.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Minor adjourned the worksession at 11:05 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Duce Minor, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Diane Green, Clerk of the Board