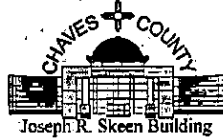




**CHAVES COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**Richard C. Taylor, Chairman
Michael J. Perry, Vice Chair**



**Dara Dana, Member
R. Cliff Waide, Member
Herbert "Hub" Corn, Member**

William B. Williams, County Manager

ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025

CHAVES COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER – JOSEPH R SKEEN BUILDING

#1 ST. MARY'S PLACE, ROSWELL, NM 88203

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Perry led the pledge, and Commissioner Dana led in prayer.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Those present were Commissioners Taylor, Perry, Dana, Waide, and Corn.

Also present, were County Manager, Bill Williams, County Attorney, Stan Riggs, Public Services Director, Alex Palomino, Chief Finance Officer, Anabel Barraza, Planning and Zoning Director, Louis Jaramillo, Purchasing Director, Analicia Nieto, Road Supervisor, Joe West, IT Director, Andrew Rey, County Clerk, Cindy Fuller, County Treasurer, Chanel Rey, Flood Superintendent, Brian Houghtalin, media, staff, and guests.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE THE AGENDA
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETINGS HELD ON NOVEMBER 13, 2025 AND DECEMBER 5, 2025
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

PROCLAMATIONS

PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS AS FIRST RESPONDERS AND ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

Commissioner Dana read the proclamation out loud recognizing "Public Safety Telecommunicators As First Responders and as Critical Infrastructure Within the Public Safety Framework". Members were present to accept the proclamation, and photos were taken with the Commissioners.

PEPPER'S FAMILY DAY

Bill Williams, Chaves County Manager, read the proclamation out loud. Thursday, December 18, 2025, was declared "Pepper's Family Day" in Chaves County. Members of the Roe Family were present to receive the proclamation, and photos were taken with the Commissioners.

PRESENTATIONS AND AGENCY UPDATES

ROSWELL-CHAVES COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mike Espiritu, President and CEO

Mr. Espiritu thanked the Commission for the honor of the Roe Family. At the last Commission meeting, he talked about the Be Pro Be Proud event. They had every high school in Chaves County represented with 149 students, 26 employers, and other organizations. Perspective employers interviewed 124 students, and some were offered jobs. The organizer said this was the best one in the state. The students were engaged and wanted to learn about opportunities in Chaves County. On the business retention and expansion program, they continue to visit businesses every month. They had a good turnout on Monksdale for the groundbreaking ceremony. The buildings at the Air Center are old. They did a retail study. They have a project for the Big Lots building. February 4, 2026, they will hold their Legislative reception at the Hotel El Dorado in Santa Fe. They have a number of projects they are currently working on. Project Seeker is a recycler of precious metals and is almost to the finish line. He thanked the Commission for their help all year long. There is a lot of discussion around the medical malpractice laws, and a hope to get legislation passed to make things better.

SENATOR CANDY SPENCE EZZELL

Senator Ezzell stated the legislators in the Southwest part of the State are in tune to what is happening and they stand together. It's important for everyone to get out and vote. If there is a need for any legislative changes they need to know now. This will be a 30-day budget session. We've seen devastation in Ruidoso, and it has affected a lot of people. She likes to brag about this part of the state. She is a farmer and rancher and there aren't very many of them left in Santa Fe anymore. She serves on the Senate Energy Committee. We have problems with our roads. They have designated money for the Tatum Highway. The cost of building anything is out of hand. We all have to work within a budget. She is here if there are questions or comments. She thanked the Commissioners for providing a space for the legislators to work here in Chaves County.

CHAVES COUNTY FLOOD COMMISSION

Brian Houghtalin, Flood Superintendent, presented the annual report and discussed challenges as well as ongoing projects. He thanked all staff and presented pictures of flooding that has occurred, along with repairs to areas they have completed.

CHAVES COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

Katie Wright and Tamara Shubert

Ms. Wright said they are excited to be in the new building and have moved almost all the way in. She thanked them for providing that. They have elected 4H Officers. January 3rd at 5:00, they will be celebrating all the youths' accomplishments throughout the year at the Fairgrounds.

Ms. Shubert gave dates for upcoming conferences. They graduated nine master gardener interns, and they will be holding an open house for people interested in joining. They have some other classes beginning in January as well. They are working on a grand opening event, possibly on January 15, 2026.

CHAVES SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Jennifer Pierce and Drew Garnett

Ms. Pierce gave an update on projects they are working on including a building grant and summer interns from local high schools. They are partnering with four other districts for their noxious weed program. They have been awarded 13 grants which will include money for restoration work, fencing, juniper issues, Hagerman canal restoration, salt cedar, pipelines, and much more. They have seed money and can work on soil samples. They will be in Santa Fe in February for Soil and Water Conservation Day.

Drew Garnett thanked the Commission for the building they have provided to the Extension Office. He gave numbers for noxious weed control which includes salt cedar work around the County. They have sprayed against African Rue. They have found new pockets of Russian Knapweed, mostly along the Hagerman Canal. Malta Star Thistle has also sprouted up and has spread by seeds dispersed by the flooding. They will also utilize controlled burns. He is looking for funding for a spray drone that will also drop seeds. This will help reduce areas of noxious weeds.

Ms. Pierce invited the Commissioners to come and see the projects they are working on.

CHAVES COUNTY HEALTH COUNCIL

Kerry Moore, Director, gave updates on their accomplishments. They have a mission to reduce gun violence and educate people on suicide prevention. They held an annual health expo and created a resource guide which is tied into their resource line. They had over 4,200 calls come into their 211 line. Disaster services, utilities, and food are big needs. SB3, Behavioral Health Reform & Investment Act was passed in 2025. This provides many services to the residents of Chaves County.

TUMBLEWEED SOLAR PROJECT

Katelyn Clancey gave a high-level overview of a project south of Highway 380. They are looking to bring the Commission an application sometime next year. They will be requesting a zone change to industrial. They are working on site studies right now. They anticipate this project will create between 400 and 500 jobs during construction. The project has very limited water use.

AGENDA ITEMS

A. AGREEMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS

1. AGREEMENT A-25-042 – REQUEST TO APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 1 FOR AGREEMENT A-25-042 BETWEEN CHAVES COUNTY AND THE MIDWAY JOY CENTER FOR THE PURCHASE OF ONE HANDICAP VEHICLE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$95,000.00

Presenter: Bill Williams, Chaves County Manager

The original agreement identified the purchase of two vehicles. This amendment revises the scope of work to authorize the purchase of only one handicap-accessible vehicle in the amount of \$95,000.00. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO AGREEMENT A-25-042
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER DANA
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

2. AGREEMENT A-25-046 – LEASE BETWEEN CHAVES COUNTY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INC. FOR THE LEASE OF A MULTI-PURPOSE BUILDING LOCATED AT 209 E. HENDRICKS

Presenter: Bill Williams, Chaves County Manager

This Agreement between Chaves County and Youth Development Inc. is for the lease of a multipurpose building located at 209 E. Hendricks. The Youth Development Inc. program operates Head Start, as well as other programs. The Head Start Program has been operating out of this building for approximately 30 years. Staff recommends approval. Members were present to give the Commissioners an update on the services that are offered.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE AGREEMENT A-25-046
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER DANA
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

3. REQUEST TO APPROVE AN AWARD RECOMMENDATION AND AGREEMENT. A-25-048 FOR RFP-26-01 DENTAL SERVICES TO BENEFIT SOURCE OF ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Presenter: Analicia Nieto, Purchasing Director

Chaves County issued a request for proposals for dental services. Chaves County received one responsive proposal from Benefit Source of Albuquerque, NM. Benefit Source is the current provider. Staff reviewed the proposal for compliance, and the evaluation committee reviewed the proposal against evaluation factors to include responses to provision of services, responses to HIPAA compliance, and claim processing. The evaluation committee recommends approval of the award and agreement A-25-048 at a rate of \$4.50 per each enrolled employee of Chaves County. The agreement term begins January 1, 2026,

through June 30, 2026, with the option to auto-renew for an additional 3 years. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE AGREEMENT A-25-048 FOR RFP-26-01
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

4. RESOLUTION R-25-053 – FINAL DISPOSITION FOR THE 2025 ROAD MAINTENANCE APPLICATIONS AND NEW ROAD REQUESTS

Presenter: Alex Palomino, Public Services Director

On May 15, 2025, the Chaves County Board of Commissioners gave preliminary approval for the following new roads and allowed six, (6) months for them to be brought up to County standards. Resolution R-25-053 is asking for the final disposition of the following:

Road Status Change Applications:

App. No. 2 & No. 8 Osage Road - **Work has not been completed** (Staff recommends denial)

App. No. 4, 5, & 6 Bronco Road - **Work has not been completed** (Staff recommends denial)

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE RESOLUTION R-25-053
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER CORN
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

5. RESOLUTION R-25-054 – AMENDMENT TO THE FEE SCHEDULE – CHAVES COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE #7

Presenter: Louis Jaramillo, Planning and Zoning Director

Staff is proposing a new fee schedule for zoning permit applications that better accounts for the Staff's expenses, which have risen over 90% since our last increase in 2020. These expenses include preparing documents, certified mail to neighbors, advertisements of public meetings, case packets, and presentation to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of Chaves County Commissioners. In compliance with Article 1, Section 5, H.6 of the Chaves County Zoning Ordinance No.7, "The Board of Chaves County Commissioners shall adopt by resolution a fee schedule, from time to time as necessary, setting forth the fees that shall apply to the Chaves County Zoning Ordinance after receiving a recommendation on such change by the Planning and Zoning Commission." The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the new fee schedule on December 2, 2025, by a vote of 4-0. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE RESOLUTION R-25-054
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

6. RESOLUTION R-25-055 – OPPOSING NEW MEXICO COUNTY INSURANCE AUTHORITY (NMCIA) CHANGES TO BYLAWS

Presenter: Bill Williams, Chaves County Manager

This Resolution opposes the recent changes to the New Mexico County Insurance Authority (NMCIA) bylaws. These changes impact and limit the county's ability to seek insurance programs and coverage from other providers due to the unnecessarily stringent requirements for rejoining the pool. Additionally, the resolution opposes additional assessments potentially being placed on counties due to inadequate pool contributions and requests a full disclosure of the financial situation to the full membership. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE RESOLUTION R-25-055
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER DANA
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER CORN
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS TAYLOR, DANA, AND CORN
OPPOSED: COMMISSIONERS PERRY AND WAIDE

7. RESOLUTION R-25-056 DECLARING THE INTENT OF CHAVES COUNTY TO ISSUE INDUSTRIAL REVENUE BONDS ON BEHALF OF SAN JUAN MESA WIND PROJECT, LLC

Presenter: Bill Williams, Chaves County Manager

This resolution, if approved, would begin the process whereby Chaves County would issue 30-year Industrial Revenue Bonds in an amount up to sixty million dollars on behalf of San Juan Mesa Wind Project, LLC, for a proposed wind farm in Chaves County. Chaves County will be finalizing the PILOT (payments in lieu of taxes) funds, which would be paid over the entire life of the bonds. No bonds shall be issued until the County Commission approves an ordinance authorizing the issuance of the bonds. This resolution is commonly referred to as an "inducement resolution" and in no way obligates the County to any further action unless approved by the County Commission. Staff are also requesting permission to publish for a public hearing as required to enact the Ordinance and issue IRBs. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE RESOLUTION R-25-056 AND GRANT PERMISSION TO PUBLISH FOR A PUBLIC HEARING
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS TAYLOR, PERRY, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: COMMISSIONER DANA

8. RESOLUTION R-25-057 – CHANGING ONE POLLING PLACE FOR THE 2026 PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE 2027 REGULAR LOCAL ELECTION

Presenter: Cindy Fuller, Chaves County Clerk

On June 26, 2025, the BOCC approved R-25-023, designating the polling places for the 2026 Primary and General Elections and the 2027 Regular Local Election. For the convenience of voters and to meet ADA requirements, Mesa Middle School, located at 1601 E. Bland St., Roswell, NM, will replace the Boys and Girls Club, located at 201 S. Garden Ave., Roswell, NM. All of the other twelve polling places will remain the same as passed in R-25-023. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE RESOLUTION R-25-057
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER DANA
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

9. RESOLUTION R-25-058 – APPROVAL OF INDIGENT HEALTH CARE CLAIMS

Presenter: Jeff Ortega, HC Director/FIA

We are requesting approval of claims for payment. Exhibit (A) American Medical Response for \$3,119.39. There were 8 claims. One claim was submitted after the 90-day deadline. Exhibit (B) La Casa de Buena Salud for \$31,873.40. There were 166 Claims. 115 for Dental, 50 for Primary Care and 1 for Mental Health. Exhibit (C) Trans Aero Medevac (Air Ambulance) for \$5,000.00. There was one claim. The total for all claims submitted is \$39,992.79. There were 175 claims. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE RESOLUTION R-25-058
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

OTHER BUSINESS

10. REQUEST TO PURCHASE ONE CUSTOM PUMPER, MODEL 22 PREMIER ENGINE FOR BERRENDO VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AT A TOTAL COST OF \$860,200.00.

Presenter: Analicia Nieto, Purchasing Director

Per the Chaves County Replacement Schedule, BVFD is due for the replacement of an engine. The purchase will be made cooperatively through Sourcewell, contract #113021, at a total cost of \$860,200.00. The estimated delivery time is 75 - 90 days from executed agreement. The Fire Marshall has approved specifications. \$485,472.00 will come from the replacement fund, \$373,528.00 will come from an approved NMFA Loan, and the remaining \$1,200.00 will come from Berrendo VFD Fire Funds. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF ONE CUSTOM PUMPER FOR BERRENDO VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

11. 2026 ROAD HEARING SCHEDULE APPROVAL REQUEST

Presenter: Alex Palomino, Public Services Director

Chaves County Public Services requests review and approval of the attached Road Hearing Schedule for 2026. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE THE 2026 ROAD HEARING SCHEDULE
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER DANA
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

12. OUT OF STATE TRAVEL – LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, GIOA CONFERENCE 2026

Presenter: Chanel Rey, Chaves County Treasurer

The Treasurer’s Office is requesting authorization to send Chanel Rey, Chaves County Treasurer, to the Government Investment Officers Association (GIOA) Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. This conference takes place March 11-13, 2026. The registration fee is \$300 for early bird pricing through January 26th. Additionally, hotel, travel, and per diem costs will all be paid for through the Treasurer’s training and travel line items in Fund 401-741. Staff recommends approval.

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL FOR THE CHAVES COUNTY TREASURER
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER DANA
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

APPROVAL OF CHECKS

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE CHECKS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,090,102.70.
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER WAIDE
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER CORN
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

MOTION MADE TO: APPROVE THE REPORTS
MOTION MADE BY: COMMISSIONER DANA
SECOND MADE BY: COMMISSIONER PERRY
IN FAVOR: COMMISSIONERS: TAYLOR, PERRY, DANA, WAIDE, AND CORN
OPPOSED: NONE

UNSCHEDULED COMMUNICATIONS ARE LIMITED TO THREE MINUTES PER VISITOR NOT TO EXCEED 15 MINUTES. NO FORMAL ACTION WILL BE TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION

Rita Kane Doerhoeffer – very narrow unstriped Chicago Bears and University of Miami mailbox, Mark Road

She is a board member for Keep Chaves County Beautiful. They don't ask for money; they write grants. She mentioned several Chaves County Departments and thanked them for their help. They managed the UFO trash on the Courthouse lawn. They do the Farmers Market, providing trash cans. She thanked the Detention folks for allowing Ray to bring the Community Service workers to help pick up trash. They also picked up trash for the Piñata Fest and the Chili Cheese Festival. She thanked Joe for the roll off, so they don't have to use the City's trash receptacles. They did a clean-up at the cemetery and will do another one this month. They helped pass out food and pick up trash at the Wool Bowl. They had a clean-up on Pioneer Plaza and at the Historical Society. They provided trash cans for MainStreet Roswell for their bazaar and the lineup for the electric light parade. They have several clean-ups planned in the new year.

Ron Martinez, 2801 W. 25th Street

He is a resident of the ETZ and has two acres in his neighborhood and has other adjoining properties. He is having a problem with a property right next to his. There is a business out there that is being operated, and he's entitled to have that business. The only exception is that he is using it outside the parameters of the ordinance. There is one provision that is being violated and that is the number of people who are coming to that residence on a daily basis. He is in contact with Bill and Planning and Zoning and they are working on this. He just wanted to make everyone aware of what's going on out there, so they are not caught without knowing.

Michael Hernandez, 610 W. 5th, Roswell

He is here today to present a petition on behalf of his wife, Jody Hernandez. It has over 600 signatures, with over 500 of those here in Roswell. It has reached far beyond New Mexico. The outpouring of support sends an unmistakable message. Our community overwhelmingly wants the nativity scene restored as a part of the Courthouse Christmas display. The ACLU's demand to remove the nativity scene was constitutionally weak, and our City's decision to surrender without any resistance was a serious mistake. The US Supreme Court has ruled again and again that nativity scenes on public property are fully constitutional when included in elements such as Christmas trees, lights, reindeer, Santa figures, and other seasonal decorations. The controlling precedent is the 1984 Supreme Court decision in Lynch v. Donnelly, where the court explicitly upheld a nativity scene because it was surrounded by secular symbols. The justices made clear that these displays celebrate the holiday season in a cultural and historical way without endorsing or coercing religion. This has been referred to as the Reindeer Rule. Our display already featured Christmas trees and lights, elements that are recognized as purely secular holiday symbols. Rather than surrender, the City could have taken the simple, proven steps in adding a few more secular items. Communities across the Country do satisfy the reindeer rule and keep their nativity scenes without losing in court. It would have been a quick, low-cost fix that preserved the display and demonstrated backbone. By folding immediately, we have invited further attacks and set a dangerous precedent. If we don't push back now, what's next? Will the Ten Commandments on our Courthouse lawn be the next target? This already happened elsewhere. This year, in Jefferson County, Illinois, a long-standing Ten Commandments display was removed from the Courthouse grounds after ACLU-backed litigation forced the Court to relocate it to a private property. Once you start retreating, the demands will never stop. This isn't about establishing a religion; it's about respecting the constitutional rights of the majority of the residents who wish to acknowledge the religious and cultural significance of Christmas in a balanced public display. More than 600 signatures have been collected in just a few days, which proves beyond any doubt that our community stands firmly behind restoring the nativity scene alongside those secular elements. He respectfully urged the Council to correct this unnecessary surrender, restore the nativity scene as part of the display, add any modest secular elements needed to reinforce the reindeer rule, and show that our City will defend its Constitutional rights and the clear will of its people.

Ravae Leonard, 1300 Gloucester Street, owns a farm at 6501 N. Main

She printed out 16 pages of votes, in which 502 were Roswell residents. She is here out of love for her city and the people in it. When she speaks, it is not out of strife or hatred; it's out of concern for the future of our city. She is here as a local business owner, a local farmer, and as a woman who was born and raised here and is not leaving, and now has to stand up and help fight for her

city. She is not a public speaker, and her gift is in backing those who God gave public speaking as their gift. So for her to stand in front of you shows that the people who are like-minded as her are concerned. She is here to respectfully express her disappointment in the board's recent decision regarding removing the nativity scene from the Courthouse. She recognizes the complexity of the decision before them. She understands that differing perspectives were considered. She is concerned about the potential impact that this decision may have on our community in the future. If you continue to cower down from demanding letters from the ACLU what will be next to go? Our Ten Commandments? She knows there is more fight in them than just giving up. As four of five of you know her personally, or on a local business level, you know she has never come forward in public to stand up for something she believes in. She has talked to most of them on different occasions, and as they have said, "Roswell deserves better and needs to go in a different direction". Two of you have shared with me that if things don't get better, you have considered relocating to a different state. All of you making this decision to let the ACLU win is an act of failure on behalf of our community. You not standing up is the exact same reason why people like you want to leave this community. What's next? Santa gets taken away because he resembles the wise men giving gifts to Jesus. Merry Christmas is turning into Merry Holiday because Christmas has Christ. No Christmas tree because this represents the tree that Jesus hung on a cross. Commissioners, each decision you make has consequences, and each time you give up what was a healthy, joyful, safe tradition, you turn our community into one step closer to darkness. If you can't handle the fight for righteousness, then I respectfully ask you to resign your chair and let someone else who will fight for righteousness in it. She thanked Jody and Michael Hernandez, who started the petition on Saturday night. Four total days and they received 606 votes, still counting, to back the nativity scene at the Courthouse. No offense, but the Community has spoken by enormous numbers, more than you received for your board position during the election. She is begging them to listen and stand up for the people now and in the future. Whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity, and honor. Proverbs 21:21.

Candy Ezzell, 8501 N. Spence Road, Lake Arthur, NM

On the industrial revenue bonds for the San Juan Mesa wind project, he was confusing people. He said there were five in place now, close to Elida, she assumes. County Manager Bill Williams stated he thought there were only five now, and they were going to retrofit five. Apparently, there are 38; they are removing 33 and only retrofitting five because the capacity output will exceed 33. They are actually building new on the same location. When he said that, it was different than what they understood it was going to be. Ms. Ezzell stated she is concerned about how much cement they have already put down right now. Part of this is State land, and part is private land. She has received numerous phone calls from people who live on White Mill Road because those turbines are turning off US70. These roads were not designed for this. She has called the Department of Transportation three times. We have couches in our bar ditches in the county and so much trash. She doesn't know how you go about changing people's mindset that it's not ok to throw trash out – that is still their backyard. Going back to Resolution 7, he did not answer the question about where that power is going. She appreciated Brian Houghtalin's report, but she had never dealt with people as rude as the FEMA people who came, and she will never allow them back on her ranch. The river had silted up so bad you could line up 10 semis side by side and drive across the river. She agrees with the statements that were made prior to her talking. It's about time we get some sanity back in our Nation, States, and Counties. She wished everyone in the room a Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah.

Sheriff Mike Herrington

The Sheriff thanked the Commission for what they have done and what they are doing for the community. He has some concern for the Chaves County Sheriff's Office due to the other counties and now our local city police department paying their officers \$29.00 an hour to start. He has gone from being one deputy down of fulfilling his 44 positions to now being eight down. He is losing one of his lead detectives, who has been here for 18 years. He is going to Eddy County because they are paying more money. He has multiple deputies looking to go elsewhere. Since the city went to \$29.00 an hour, they are not getting any applicants because they start at \$22.00 an hour. He wanted to bring this to their attention.

Detective Ramos, #1 St. Mary's Place, Roswell

Detective Ramos stated he was there to speak to them on behalf of the Chaves County Sheriff's Office, who serve this county every day, often quietly, often unseen, but always with commitment and professionalism. Every shift, deputies put on a badge, knowing they may not go home. Dedication alone does not pay the bills. This is not a choice anyone who risks their life for this

county should have to make. The demands have grown but compensation has not kept pace with the reality of the job or neighboring agencies. This has created a serious problem for the Chaves County Sheriff's Office in recruitment and retention. They are losing trained deputies to surrounding counties, state agencies, and even private sector jobs, not because they want to leave this community, but because they must provide for their families. Every deputy they lose represents tens of thousands of dollars in training costs, years of experience, and a gap in public safety. When they fail to invest in the deputies, they risk understaffing, burnout, slower response times, and more. Deputies are not asking to be wealthy but to be fairly compensated for the risk they take. This decision sends a message that we either value and support those who protect our community or that we are willing to let them fall behind. They respectfully ask them to stand with the Chaves County Sheriff's Office, recognize the realities of modern policing, and approve a pay increase that reflects the importance of their work.

COUNTY MANAGER'S COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Williams commended the speakers on their words and thanked them for speaking up. He stated it was a great day to pass out the proclamations to Pepper's and Telecommunicators. He thanked all the Chaves County staff for the service that they provided, not just this year, but every year. He wished them all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He thanked the Commissioners and stated that there are a lot of things people don't understand that are going on behind the scenes. Quite often, people don't understand everything that the County Commission does. He thanked the Commissioners for allowing him to acquire a nativity scene to put in our community. Every year at Christmas time, people post pictures of the angels that used to hang over Main Street and say, "I remember being out there with my grandmother as a little girl or boy". He remembers that too, and that is what started this conversation, is they'd like something to be available 30, 40 years from now for our kids and grandkids to remember the same as we remember the angels. He thanked the Commissioners for allowing the nativity to be set up on the Courthouse steps. That was their decision to make, and they knew we would come under fire and be challenged. He thanked them for allowing him to temporarily store the nativity scene at an alternate location. The takeaway here is that the nativity scene is still in our community and still represents what it's supposed to represent. He also thanked them for not endangering the taxpayer's money on a possibility of losing over a million dollars that could be used by the ACLU or others to come back and sue some other community. We have a whole year to determine the best route forward for next year. He thanked them for not being ok with Santa Claus, gingerbread men, yule logs, and other things displayed alongside the nativity scene. It is a stand-alone scene, and it should be, and that's why it had a place of prominence, not just down in the mix, because Jesus Christ is his Lord and Savior, and he is glad that He still exists and reigns and is still in our community. This is not a loss and it still stands where it needs to be. He thanked Bullocks. Within 30 seconds of explaining what was going on they were in for that location to be moved to. He thanked Craig Waide and his crew. Mr. Williams stated that he didn't want to use County resources to move it. He volunteered and some other County employees volunteered on their own time. He had a meeting at 2:00 in Albuquerque and waited until the nativity scene was back up prominently on Main Street, maybe in a better location. It makes no difference where it is; Christ is in our community. The mission was to bring Christ into our community and allow that to be seen for decades to come. He thanked his pastors and friends who were available on a moment's notice to help them move that and make sure it still stood within our community. He also thanked the people who have been supportive of their efforts and asked people to look beyond the fact that you might not agree with them determining what route to take, but look at the fact they kept it, brought it into the community for our children to see for decades to come and it's still there.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMUNICATIONS **COMMISSIONER DANA**

Commissioner Dana thanked Bill and the Commissioners and stated she is with Bill that it sends a message no matter where it is. It's still downtown and goes to show that one voice complains but there were a whole lot more, 600, she's gotten calls and emails, there are a lot more voices that are with us than against us. We did stand our ground, and they will. She thanked our law enforcement; she does pray for them. She has been on the receiving end; they were there for her and her family, and she thanks them. Hopefully, we can work something out. We do have counties around us that have a lot of money. They run into this situation with a lot of things. Lea and Eddy have oil and gas, but we try to do what we can and always will. They bought a pumper truck for Berrendo and try to keep up with the equipment. They will not spend like drunken sailors like the State and some other cities do; we have to live within our means. She thanked the staff and stated she appreciates everything they have done this year. She thanked Rita for the recap. She has also picked up trash

at our trash sites. Nobody knows what goes on behind the scenes unless you walk into their office and sit down with them. She does that to find out what is going on because she has questions, and so do her constituents. She told everyone Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Holidays, it doesn't matter, it's all the holidays, we're all one. We are a great family here in Chaves County.

COMMISSIONER WAIDE

Commissioner Waide stated he is just so thankful for everything. We are a week away from the celebration of our Savior's birth, and he is filled with thankfulness for the community and the people who serve us. He thanked Bill for standing up and making sure that the nativity scene is prominently displayed in our community. He thanked the volunteers who assisted at no expense to the county. Hopefully, this may become a permanent place where it can be displayed for Christmas, and enhancements can be made along the way. Maybe more people can see it where it is now. As he was driving by yesterday, there were people gathered there and it makes him feel a whole lot better that it is there. He thanked the Bullock Family for providing the place. They had a finance meeting earlier this week, and he is so thankful for our Finance Department. We don't have the revenues we'd like. Our projections are so conservative and we naturally have more expenses that we need to cover. He thanked the Clerk's Office for another successful election season, honest and fair. He thanked the Admin office for caring as much as everyone does. Alex goes above and beyond on his projects, trying to figure out how to save this County money, but make the projects safe for the people who use it. He appreciates the dedication of all the staff. The Treasurer's Office going through what they went through a week ago. The Road Department was out filling potholes yesterday. He just wanted to say thank you.

COMMISSIONER CORN

Commissioner Corn stated that everyone has already said everything out of his head. The Sheriff's Office, he appreciates their concerns and says it's something they are going to have to look into. They will get something figured out to stay safe. He told Joe that he knows he is on top of everything and doing a good job. All the staff are doing a good job. Everybody has concerns about the nativity scene, and Bill has done an excellent job. The people who showed up and showed their concerns is what we need. We need to push back on some of these people. He appreciates Candy for showing up and giving them a little chat. He told Mr. Martinez that they have been looking into his stuff. He told Stan to keep on the contracts and the wind turbine deal. He is still on the loop of 4,500 acres for 5 turbines and doesn't believe it is their intent to just replace 5 turbines. They had their adjustments on their zoning part and we agreed with those numbers but he is still on the fence, we need a maximum number of acres on that instead of just open ended. Merry Christmas to everybody.

COMMISSIONER PERRY

Commissioner Perry thanked all the employees. There have been a lot of projects this year that have been expanded and improved upon, and he appreciates that. He told Ms. Clancey that he would like to talk with her about royalty rates because he didn't like what he heard either. He wants to make sure Chaves County and the State are being treated fair. Let's all say a prayer for Madison Dictson, she was in a horrible car accident. She is a Goddard graduate and an NM State graduate and has her whole life ahead of her. He told the Sheriff he would do what he can to help; he did it for ten bucks an hour back in the day, and he's sure he did too. It doesn't make it right because we will lose deputies. We will have to make the pay package a little more incentivized. He doesn't think it feels right where the nativity scene ended up, but it's there, and it's up. If you really think about this system that came to be, he remembers he and Bill discussing this. The tree was a danger last year. Here we are a year later, where we're a little bit offended and frustrated because we had to move it. He stated he will try to be positive, and all the offensiveness and how we feel about it has kind of brought 600 people to sign a petition to say we're offended. What are they all talking about, Jesus Christ. It's a good thing people are talking about that. Maybe this will bring us to a spot where we will make this nativity scene better than it's ever been. Next year, we're all gonna be in a better spot, but we have to start with positive projections. We are talking and moving in the right direction.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR

Commissioner Taylor stated it's a shame when one person can raise an issue that hurts so many people in our County. He commended our County Manager for being proactive and taking immediate action. He had several phone calls the night he received notice that the ACLU was going to sue us. They decided they needed to find another location. At 8:00 the next morning, Bill called him and had found the ideal location. Within hours, they had it moved, and he congratulated

and thanked Bill Williams for being proactive. There have been many positive things that have happened in our community; we have new businesses coming in and it's a bright future. Things are looking up. He thanked all the employees. We have a great staff here in Chaves County; they work hard and are so committed. The employees got together and put up beautiful Christmas trees in our lobby. He thanked every department and stated they excel and make it a family. We all have to remember what the season really is. He hopes all of us can have a prayer for peace. There is too much war and hurt in our nation. Pray for peace, that is the biggest gift we can all have. He wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy Hannukah. He had a special thank you to the biggest Cubs fan for bringing him a Dodgers pin.

SIGNATURE OF DOCUMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 pm.



Cindy Fuller
Cindy Fuller, County Clerk

BOARD OF CHAVES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Richard C. Taylor
Richard C. Taylor, Chairman

Michael J. Perry
Michael J. Perry, Vice-Chairman

Dara Dana
Dara Dana, Member

R. Cliff Waide
R. Cliff Waide, Member

Herbert 'Hub' Corn
Herbert 'Hub' Corn, Member