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SANTA FE

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING

February 9, 2007

Jack Sullivan, Vice Chair

Michael Anaya

Harry Montoya

Virginia Vigil, Chairman [Excused]

Paul Campos [Excused]

SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/26/2007

**SANTA FE COUNTY
SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

February 9, 2007

This special meeting of the Santa Fe Board of County Commissioners was called to order at approximately 1:15 p.m. by Vice Chair Jack Sullivan, in the Santa Fe County Commission Chambers, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Roll was called by Deputy County Clerk Shirley Hooper and indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

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| Members Present: | Members Absent: |
| Commissioner Jack Sullivan, Vice Chair | Commissioner Virginia Vigil, Chair |
| Commissioner Mike Anaya | Commissioner Paul Campos |
| Commissioner Harry Montoya | |

C. Approval of the Agenda

There being no suggested changes, and upon motion by Commissioner Montoya and second by Commissioner Anaya, the agenda was unanimously approved as published.

D. Discussion of Declaration of Emergency Disaster in Southern Santa Fe County

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the Commission and members of the audience. About four days ago we passed a resolution declaring an emergency in southern Santa Fe County, which I really appreciate. We at Public Works Department are working hard along with the Department of Transportation to clear the roads. There are people that are stranded and they can't get out of their homes, and some people that were stranded couldn't get into their homes. Children couldn't go to school. We've got a serious drift problem with snow and mud and when we enacted the disaster declaration we went out there with our dozers and loaders and we didn't really have a plan. My concern was we didn't open the Emergency Operations Center. We didn't address how we were going to clean these roads and didn't have a plan on where we were

going to start and what we were going to do.

Our department has worked hard, hard, all of those people and I give them a lot of credit. We had – we didn't have in place on how we were going to contact our legislators and our representatives, our congressional delegation and our elected officials, and I would just like to recognize that our Senator, Sue Wilson Beffort is here. Thank you, Senator, and here aide Angela King. Thank you for being here. Mayor Calkins from Edgewood and our Councilor Rita Loy from Edgewood is here. I appreciate your support.

So we needed to somehow inform the public that in a disaster there's a telephone number that you can call and how to get a hold of us, and what we have been doing in terms of providing assistance to the residents in Santa Fe County. So we have developed this plan and that's why I asked for a special meeting and again, thank you for being here to go over this plan and continue getting support for this plan. Also keeping our Governor's office and our Governor informed because I know he's getting calls too.

So with that, I would like to turn it over to Roman Abeyta to maybe answer or let us know what exactly we're doing.

MR. ABEYTA: Thank you, Mr. Chair, Commissioner Anaya. We got together yesterday and we met with both the County Sheriff, the emergency operations director, our public information officer and our Public Works director and we now have in place a coordinated effort to address the number of calls that we've been receiving in southern Santa Fe County. As you stated, Mr. Chair, we also have had the Department of Transportation's cooperation. They have been out in southern Santa Fe County with us and Mr. Chair, I would like to have Martin Vigil, our emergency services director talk to the Commission a little bit about what's happening now with our emergency operations center and what we've experienced over the last 24 hours, since the emergency was declared. Martin.

MARTIN VIGIL (EOC Director): Thank you, Commissioner Sullivan, Commissioners. I'd just like to take you back to last Friday. We had actually been working calls through the Regional Emergency Communications Center and the Office of Emergency Management. We handled about 40 calls, coordinating those calls with the Public Works Department. Some were of a serious nature, as it's been challenging for all of our 911 response folks to get into doing regular 911 calls.

I think one of the important distinctions is that we didn't have the triggers as far as call volume or acuity of volume until Monday and I'd like to take you back that that's where we really started to see the mud issues occur with that warm weather trend. And I think it coincided with that meeting that you all called. Systems were in place and that's how the Emergency Operations Center was able to get on line very quickly. We have procedures in place to accept those calls, triage them or prioritize them, dedicate resources, both from the County Public Works side but also the County Fire Department, and the follow up to resolution of those calls.

I want to report that as of yesterday we handled 17 calls for assistance in the Emergency Operations Center, none of which were high priority. We did have 40 calls for

assistance as of the start of this meeting. Again, it seemed to be mostly mud access with no high acuity type calls but we are posed, ready to respond to those if need be. The plan that Commissioner Anaya referred to as an incident action plan that was only assembled with the EOC basically got operational, and we do those on a daily basis and this case will be our operations periods. So that is all coordinated with our assets. Everybody has a game plan, communications plans are in place along with that. And we're following the National Incident Management System, which we're all pretty much on and have received training on.

We are planning on keeping the center open through the weekend. We are expecting a change in weather starting Saturday evening and we're constantly monitoring that with our NOA weather feed into the center. But as all of you are aware, mud is a very different challenge than what snow removal activities occurred. We're asking residents to bear with us. We don't really have the technology. Nobody does. Or tactics or equipment, materials, to change mud conditions. It's just something that occurs naturally. Our biggest concern is can we get to people that need 911 services and that's what we're focusing our energy on from the emergency services standpoint and continuing snow removal activities with Public Works. We've been coordinated in that effort ever since the beginning of the first snowstorm. So I'm very pleased with how that has been going on.

Just in closing, I'd just like to mention that as frustrating and as inconvenient this weather pattern has been, a year ago we were watching half of our state burn. So there is a positive note to this, that we do definitely need the moisture. But it is challenging at best. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MONTROYA: Mr. Chair.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Commissioner Montoya.

COMMISSIONER MONTROYA: Martin, in terms of those 40 calls, have they all come from the southern part of the county?

MR. VIGIL: They have not. Today it's been about half from the southern part and half scattered throughout the remainder of the county. We're still seeing a little bit of cluster activity down in the south 14 area, which was consistent with the snow issues and a few issues out of the Eldorado area. But the drifting predominantly occurred in the southern part of the county. I was involved in one medication mission on Monday and we still had significant drifts that we were having to break through in that area.

COMMISSIONER MONTROYA: Okay. I don't know if it's because of the publicity that we're getting now or what but I've received a couple of calls in the last couple of days, about four in my area. I guess things thawed a little bit slower in the northern part of the county but we're getting the same thing now in terms of mud and people getting concerned about emergency vehicle access as well. So I would just ask that the Commission and the staff when looking at what we're doing for the southern part of the county, take into consideration that northern Santa Fe County is now beginning to experience the same thing that's happened in the southern part of the county.

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Mr. Chair, Martin, what are we doing in

terms of notification to the public?

MR. VIGIL: We have had a couple press releases that have gone out and we verified just this morning's new coverage that the information has gone out to a number of media outlets. And they call the 911 center we have a bulleted sheet that all call-takers are being able to work off of, and just some strategies that we're asking people to consider is to maybe plan their travel when it's still early morning and late in the evening. There are certain areas that it makes sense to maybe stage your vehicle and seek maybe other options, maybe an ATV or maybe another four-wheel drive to get into the actual residence.

Again, it's just very frustrating that we can't do anything to change the conditions and the best we can do us just try and make sure that we don't have high priority calls that are not being answered. But until the weather changes, obviously we're going to be in this situation.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Mr. Chair.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Commissioner Montoya.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Martin, in terms of emergency response, do we have something set up where we have an emergency that a helicopter or some sort of transportation like that is available?

MR. VIGIL: Yes, we have two civilian flight services that we work with on a continuing basis, and those are immediately available to us. We certainly have state access through the National Guard if we deem that that's necessary, we can escalate it to that level. We have a lot of four-wheel drive capability throughout the county. We have one military six-by-six vehicle that is on standby at the Public Safety building, and we have some ATV that are patient-capable transporters that are loaded and ready to go.

Again, I've actually been out there and any of you that have been in the real high acuity areas know even with four-wheel drive vehicles it's very challenging. But we do have assets ready to go and we've coordinated that sort of 911 response with our Public Works Department also.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Okay. So a number of modes of transportation to ensure the safety of people who may have a medical emergency. What about a fire emergency?

MR. VIGIL: Same thing. That six-by-six is firefighting-capable and again, we do have throughout the Santa Fe County a number of pieces of apparatus that at least are four-wheel drive, six-wheel drive capable.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Mr. Chair, Martin, I feel a lot better now that I know that we have the Emergency Operations Center running. That we will be able to take calls and track them and we know that this is not an inexpensive process. This involves a lot of money and hopefully by tracking these calls that we can eventually go to our legislators and our congressional delegation and probably get funding for reimbursement. I want to also thank our Commissioner Schutz, Tim Manning from the

Governor's office, Secretary Faught for helping us, Representative King, for helping us get the DOT involved, because we only have so many people at our department and we are working them two ten-hour shifts, I believe and they are getting worn out. I just want to thank them and I especially want to thank our Senator and our Mayor and our Councilors for being here. I know Representative King wanted to be here but she couldn't make it, and Senator Campos.

But I think in order to get over this our main concern is the residents and we need to work together as a team in order to overcome this.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you, Martin. Senator Wilson, would you like to make some comments? And also Mayor Calkins.

SENATOR SUE WILSON BEFFORT: Thank you very much for allowing me to attend this and to actually get to meet some of the Commissioners that I don't know as well. I certainly know Commissioner Anaya. The beautiful thing about New Mexico is that we are a rural state intertwined with our urban areas. That comes with, unfortunately, some challenges when things such as this are occurring, and yet one of the things that I think is great about Santa Fe County and Edgewood and the Moriarty area is that we have a bipartisan support for whatever we need. It has nothing to do with politics or any other things. We all care about our citizens. We all care about helping out however we can.

So I know that Representative King is always there. She lives in the area. I now live on north 14 as well, so we are very accessible to our citizens and I greatly appreciate Commissioner Anaya really having his finger on the pulse of this. It appears that southern is not the only area being affected now. So I know the Governor will be available with his help and I know that Senator Campos will as well. So please call on us. Hopefully the weather is going to even out but I do hear that we're going to have a snow and I'm real happy about all of this because of the need for water in our aquifers and our streams, but that does come sometimes with some challenges.

So thank you very much. I don't know if there's going to be a conclusion to today's meeting or if this was just a formality, if I should stay or if I should get back to my session.

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Mr. Chair, Senator, I believe that you can get back to your work. Thanks for coming in.

SENATOR WILSON BEFFORT: Okay, great. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: We appreciate your support. Edgewood and the southern area used to be in District 5 before we redistricted after the last census. So I was elected to District 5 when it included Edgewood and all that area. So I have an important feeling that these are still my constituents.

SENATOR WILSON BEFFORT: Well, of course that's the way I feel as well. It doesn't matter if we're on one side of the highway or the other, I feel like the whole east mountains is my family and I know that Representative King does too. We kind of live out there with the people. So thank you very much and I really appreciate getting to address the Commission and any consideration that you might have. Or, since we are in

session, it's just around the block there if you need to come up and ask for come emergency funding.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Thank you, Senator.

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Mayor, don't leave. Come on up here.

Martin, I've got a question for you too, so don't leave.

MAYOR HOWARD CALKINS: Chairman Sullivan, you and I have known each other quite a while and we both have acquired some gray hair. I've known Mike for a long time. Harry and I went through Leadership New Mexico together. I appreciate letting us know that you have an interest and that we can help. We all need to work together. I know during this storm when the wind got up so bad the state people were working on 41 and State Road 344 was so bad they were off of the road. Time for school to be out. So we put one of our machines off and sent it over on the State Road to open that up so the school buses could get out.

I want you to know that my interest there is not for any personal reasons. My heart and soul is there. It's my country. I was raised there. I even went out in my own little tractor and cleaned driveways and berms out. People don't understand that you can't stop and clean every driveway out. But we will work with you and we appreciate everything you've done. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Thank you, Mayor.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Thank you, Mayor. Good to see you.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you. Councilor. Thanks for coming.

RITA LOY SIMMONS: Thank you. My name is Rita Loy Simmons. I'm so pleased that Commissioner Anaya called me, and I want you to know the depth of the dedication. I had to go past 344 and 472 the other day and Commissioner Anaya was there with the road crew. When we had part of Frost Road blow nearly shut our mayor was out; he was the flagman on the crew. So if we could help the new people understand Mother Nature will inconvenience us from time to time, and that's when you get to know your neighbors. We had incidents of people out on snowmobiles checking on their neighbors. There's a network to call. There's an awful lot of four-wheel drive vehicles high-centered on some drift or another. So thank you so much for taking the time out of your busy schedules to arrange this. Thank you, Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: To you as well. Thank you for you time and the community effort that this takes. Martin, I did have one question to ask and that was how are we coordinating with the school district. My concern is that we have stuck school buses. Does the school district contract to have those buses pulled out, or do they call you? How does that work?

MR. VIGIL: I haven't had any direct dialogue with the bus companies. Most them, particularly in that area, I believe we have three main vendors. They are radio-equipped is my understanding. We haven't gotten any actual calls for that, although I did see one image on the news, I think this morning. So as to what's coming into the center,

we're not aware of any bus issues. I know that they have changed some of their routes because the roads are just strictly impassable. I would like the community to at least have some thought, particularly when you start walking like from the bus stop or if you're staging your vehicle to consider the current weather conditions and I would not go beyond a lengthy distance, because we don't want people out exposed into the elements.

But I can make some of those calls and just touch base with them and see how they're doing.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: I was wondering and considered - I don't think we've had any incidents like this, but I've seen and read of it in other parts of the country - buses become stranded. The students are on the buses for a long period of time. They run out of fuel; it gets cold. Do our radios communicate with these bus radios? With the school district?

MR. VIGIL: They do not. Some of them do have cell phone access. We have worked a number of bus issues with some evacuation plans, particularly in the Moriarty-Edgewood area, and one of the things we encountered was that these are private vendors that seem to have their own radio nets. We tried to tie into them and weren't very successful in that regard. But I think it's at least worth a phone call to see how they're doing and make sure that they know the EOC number and that sort of thing.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: I wonder if there's any legislation that we should pursue that would try to standardize communication frequencies or something. Getting back to the old CB radio days. We can all go on the CB radio and call out in an emergency if we want, if we are equipped. But it seems like we ought to have a standardized method and maybe, as you say, because mostly they're private companies, that may require legislation or even perhaps an ordinance, a County ordinance. I'm not sure.

MR. VIGIL: Commissioner Sullivan, actually, the communications part of it is mandated by a presidential directive to have and develop interoperable communications. I think we've done a lot in the emergency response arena. It's now looking at kind of the private sector and how we interface with that. I started working on just an initial investigation in the Pojoaque School District, absolutely in line with what you're asking - how do we get that communication network? One of the things I encountered in that initial investigation is unless the bus company is willing to fork over that expense there doesn't seem to be federal resources to help establish some of that for private sector, and that might be a real strong thing for legislation.

Because we're invariably going to call bus companies for evacuation needs and I think that will be definitely worthwhile spent looking into that.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: And I just wonder if even these bus companies know the emergency number, the number that we've been giving out. I don't know that we've - have we mentioned it, Commissioner Anaya?

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: No, we haven't. Martin, maybe you might want to mention that number.

MR. VIGIL: the Emergency Operations Center number is 995-1842, and it does get rolled over at night to the Regional Emergency Communications Center. When the EOC is not in operation that number is not active. So it's just during the EOC operations.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Can we make an effort to get these school districts and the private operators apprised of that?

MR. VIGIL: I've got a note here to do that.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thanks. Put that on your to-do list. Any other questions, comments from the Commission?

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Mr. Chair, I believe there might be some public comment.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Sure.

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Thanks, Martin.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Anyone like to take the opportunity?

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: I did have a question for staff.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Oh, you've got another question for Martin?

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: No, for James. Before you leave Martin, I do want to thank you for all that you're doing on this. You've always been there and we're very fortunate to have you in Santa Fe County, so thank you. Really appreciate it.

James, just in terms of - we've heard that our staff are working almost 24/7. In terms of relief, what are we doing? As much as we would like to help people, as much as we would like to be out there to do everything that we could, the reality is we have so many resources to go with that can go around and then we have to let people rest and eat and see their families and that sort of thing. So what are we doing in terms of - I know since the snows came probably to this moment which is already a month we've probably been in this situation. And I'm just wondering, what are we doing to allow some sort of relief for our staff?

JAMES LUJAN (Public Works Director): Mr. Chair, Commissioner Montoya, what we have been doing probably since December 31st, we've been working of course ten to 12-hour days. Saturdays and Sundays. This last Monday we went into two shifts from five till 2:00 in the afternoon, then 2:00 to midnight. What I'm thinking of doing in the next few days is - on night shift, we're not making a whole lot of headway. We're having a whole lot of trouble with equipment failures and stuff so we may start backing off that and I'll probably just work long - 5:00 to dark, and that's what we're planning on doing and looking at this after Monday.

We have been running the two crews, like I say and some guys have been able to take off; others have not. We've also hired some private contractors. The DOT was helping us up to this morning. We've rented more equipment to try and make it easier but I'm going to start having to let some of these guys take some leave. So hopefully we've pulled all the resources together. The road maintenance project - I've put all the crews

on, so basically all we're doing, we're leaving some guys up in the north for pothole repair. We've got a crew scattered here. That's about all we're doing and hopefully we'll get some reprieve here pretty quick and be able to leave. But I'm thinking of just working some longer days and maybe some more private contractors.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: So in terms of the private contractors, that would be our best avenue to pursue, I think, at this point, in terms of allowing our regular staff to kind of recuperate somewhat. What are we running to in terms of resources for those private contractors? What are we looking at in terms of dollars and cents?

MR. LUJAN: Well, the going rate for contractors is probably anywhere from \$125 an hour up to about \$225 an hour. And that's with their equipment. They're coming out - right now we've got a bulldozer down off 84/285 and County Road 36. It's in the higher mountains area, so we're working in there. It's costing us, just our staff about \$7,000 a day.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Just our staff.

MR. LUJAN: Just our staff. These other contractors, we're probably looking somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2500 to \$3500 a day. So what I'm doing is exhausting my budget but we will continue and it looks like I may need some more private contractors. Right now, the other thing coming up a lot is potholes and I just don't have enough manpower to take care of that also. The blading of the roads up north - like I say, we're keeping skeleton crews. I wanted to see if I could give them off Sunday but I don't know if we're going to be able to. They're going to work through tomorrow.

The night work is not panning out as good because it's just so, so wet. The other thing that's going to happen with this is our equipment failures. After this we're going to have to take a look at repairing a lot of equipment.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: What are we looking at potentially in terms of dollars and cents there? You talking about probably repair and replace?

MR. LUJAN: Well, not so much - most of our equipment is new lease. We've had it a year, but it's taking a toll on bearings and tire, chains. It's just operation and maintenance that we're going to have to do.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: So it's not really replace, just repair.

MR. LUJAN: Probably not replace. Probably just repair, so we can get ready for summer again.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Roman, have we looked at the budget in terms of the impact that this is having? And what relief are we seeking from state and federal sources?

MR. ABEYTA: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Montoya, we are keeping track. James actually has really good records as far as cost. We do have some reserves to help us for now, but we're going to seek reimbursement from the state, and that's why we have asked the Commission to declare these emergencies is because that's one thing that it does, it allows us to pursue funding from the state. But we will keep the Board informed over the next few weeks as we have regular Commission meetings. I'll provide you an update and

we will have information as far as cost. Also at these meetings we'll let you know what the costs have been running so far.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Will what we're looking at have an impact on any potential projects that are scheduled through the remainder of this fiscal year?

MR. ABEYTA: Mr. Chair, Commissioner Montoya, no, only because we have good reserves in the County. But my fear is that once those reserves have gone, they're gone. So I can't see any immediate impact, but we could see impacts in the long run to our reserves, especially if we don't get reimbursed from the state for this.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: And those reserves are for all County operations.

MR. ABEYTA: That's correct.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: That's just not for snow removal of Public Works.

MR. ABEYTA: Right. That's for all County. That's why I said, immediate, I don't have a concern, but long term, I do. Because once the reserves are gone, they're gone.

COMMISSIONER MONTOYA: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you, James. We appreciate your efforts and let me just report one thing also. Yesterday we had a well attended meeting in Senator Grubestic's office, along with also Representative Wirth's representative, which is his wife, Carol, and a number of people from the Eldorado/285 area, which was mentioned as an area where Martin has also received calls. One of our ICIP priorities this year was basecoursing, additional funds for basecoursing, and it was for \$500,000 for basecoursing, particularly in the Eldorado general area which contains about 80 miles of County Road that are either dirt or basecourse.

They were quite supportive, I think of that funding initiative, so I think we're going to see some substantial improvement to our road advisory funding through this basecourse funding. It will be primarily for the 285 Eldorado area, but what that does is then frees up some of the basecourse funds that we would otherwise be using there to move to other areas such as the northern part of the county and the southern part of the county. So we're attacking it from three sides, kind of like the hunger fork in the Berlin airlift. We have a real issue there as well. People are in the same situation. Fortunately, their neighbors are generally closer than they are in some of the more rural areas and it's easier to get help from a neighbor than if you're two or three miles down a County road and you can't get in or you can't get out.

So I just wanted to let folks know that we're getting some good reception from that and if we don't get \$500,000 we'll get certainly a good appropriation that will go directly towards basecourse. Were there some folks that would like to comment further?

GEORGIA WATROUS: My name is Georgia Watrous and I'm here to speak for the Rainbow's End area, which is south on County 14, and then you go left on 55-A along the railroad tracks. 55-A is a County road. Rainbow's End is not considered a

County road although those of us who live here do consider it a County road. There's approximately 45 families there who own homes, who work and pay taxes and recently we're paying a lot more taxes. So I'm not here to criticize; I'm just here to state our case as briefly as I can and hope that you will - I'd like to actually invite you to come out there and take a look at what we're dealing with.

The road is impassable. And I also want to preface this by thanking the County for coming out during the storm. We did call the County. The County came out at one point and made a slot up Rainbow's End, up Horny Toad Road onto the mesa, where there are many families living. It's all solar up there. Some of it's by choice; some of it is because they can't afford to put electric in. We had a young family with two young children. No heat whatsoever who lived under blankets for a week. During that storm, we had a woman who thought she was having a heart attack. It was an all-night process for them to get to her and they wouldn't probably have gotten to her if the County hadn't come out and made that path. But she experienced her difficulty trying to shovel out to that place.

So we're in a lot of trouble out there. I own a Toyota Tacoma, four-wheel drive. My neighbor, Ira here has a Ford F-350. We can't get in or out. We have to park out on 55-A and hike back in and out each day. I don't believe emergency vehicles could get to us. A helicopter could certainly get to us. I'm not here to complain and criticize I'm just saying we really need help. The first 600 yards of Rainbow's End are above my knees in mud. It's impossible to get in. All that runoff is going out onto 55-A which is a County Road. There's no provision made for that runoff. It's a huge mud pie out there as well right in front of this area. We're all parking out there.

We're all stressed. We're all exhausted, as are many people in the county and I understand that and I appreciate that. I know Ira probably has a lot more to say about it than I do. I just want to say that we work hard. We're willing to do our part, but the County has stated to us that in order to bring Rainbow's End up to a position where they would take it over, it would be \$100,000 a mile. We're working people. Many single women who live alone. Young families. It's not a wealthy road. The access up to the mesa, I can only describe it as hellacious. No one there can afford to come up with that kind of money. If we were able to get a couple of big loads of fill at the beginning of the road, I think that would solve our problem temporarily. We just don't have the resources to do it. And it's a dangerous situation right now. So that's pretty much what I wanted to say. There's a lot more to say but I'll leave that to my neighbors. But I wanted to stand up there and just say that. We really need help and we don't know what to do about it at this point in time.

We've hired people to come in with backhoes and scrapers. We need fill. It's unbelievable. And I really would ask that someone could come out there and just drive down 55-A and take a look at what we're dealing with. And I know we're not the only ones. There are many people in the county but it's very difficult to listen to people talking about filling potholes when we're in that situation and there are others in that situation as well.

So I want to thank you for letting me speak and that's the basic idea. That's what I had to say.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you for coming here this afternoon and letting us know about the severity of that. Ira, what would you like to add?

IRA BIBB: My name is Ira Bibb. I reside in – I think it's the 50th district. That's the Cerrillos area. That's also 55-A. My neighbor was saying it's quite difficult, once you go down 55-A and reach Rainbow's End it is impassable. I was sitting there sarcastically thinking I'd like to invite you guys out to dinner this evening. If I did, I doubt if one could make it. Just one.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: It depends on what you're having.

MR. BIBB: And that includes the Fire Department with their six-wheel vehicle. I'm not being critical. I just want to see you smile a bit. We're in such pain out there. There are 45 families that live in that area. Where I live, I live up on the mesa. I built a house about four years ago out there. Okay? In order for the cement truck to get to my house to pour the foundation in July, they had to dump half of my load at the bottom. I had eight yards on the truck. They had to dump two loads at the bottom in order to climb the hill to get to my house. That's how difficult it is on a clear, summer day.

So with the mud the way it is out there now, I have a 350 4x. I've torn my suspension up trying to come in and out. It's just impossible. But like I was saying, during the summer it's passable. We get one rain, just one rain, and we're in trouble. With this snowstorm, all the snow – we appreciate it very much. Don't misunderstand me. We appreciate all the help that was given to us. There is no way we could pay you back in dollars and cents. It's just impossible. You saved our lives, and I mean that literally. You saved our lives.

What I'm saying, this road now is just impassable for fire vehicles, for emergency vehicles, for the people that live there. Now, you must understand we have to walk in the mud to get to where we're going. The mud is knee-deep. If a truck can't get through it we have to go off of the road, go down the snow-pack, to get to where we're going. We're talking about a distance of seven miles. Seven miles. That's from 55-A, Rainbow's End, to the back of Horny Toad Road. It's about seven miles. Some people have gotten together, the neighbors have gotten together and they ferry each other down to the bottom where all the vehicles are parked, down on 55-A, which is not a superhighway either. It's dirt also, and when it rains, it's impassable.

It's very dangerous and we take our lives into our own hands just getting to 14. But we still need help. We need help desperately. And if you can find any coins in your budget for us we'd totally appreciate it. But thank you very much for your time.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you. Yes, ma'am.

JILL EPSTEIN: My name's Jill Epstein and I live on Horny Toad Road and I too thank you all for helping us out during the last storm, coming up and plowing snow. I have a thought. I am one of the people who has been staging vehicles and we were doing okay until last night and I got a call from my husband saying, you're not making it home

tonight. We were doing okay waiting for – going out in the morning when everything was frozen but now it's so warm at night, getting back in is the issue.

So I'm wondering if there's some mechanism that we could set up so we could help people – I can't go home and I'm looking for a place to stay in town. And I've stayed at the Camel Rock Suites last night but that's quickly becoming unaffordable. And I'm wondering, for other people, if we might be able to have some kind of hot line where if people have properties or casitas that they're willing to rent to people in this situation and we can hook people up, if there's some way we could do a hot line, that would be fantastic. Because I've been on line trying to find accommodations and trying to use my network of friends and family to do that, but I'm sure there are other people that are in the same situation. If there might be some way we could do something like that.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: That's a good idea. You're welcome to stay with us if you like. We have a spare room. That will be interesting for my wife when I bring home a young lady this evening.

MS. EPSTEIN: I also have a 13-year old.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: That would be fine too. Commissioner Anaya.

COMMISSIONER ANAYA: Mr. Chair, we do have those accommodations lined up. You just have to dial the number, 995-1842, and Martin Vigil who was just here can accommodate in helping you if you need a place to stay. That is a part of the plan. And Mr. Chair, just a couple comments for Ira. I know exactly what you deal with. I live – the road I'm on is eight miles, and to get out of my place I have to put chains on all four tires. Okay? And then you're talking about changing your clothes because you have to come to work, and then changing back in to put the chains back on – it's not easy. I know exactly what you're dealing with.

We talked a little bit about the money. I know that it costs money for us to run what we're doing now. It costs money to replace equipment. We can replace the equipment. We can replace the money. But we can't replace lives. And if we lose a life, that is what I'm concerned about. So I know that there's a lot of money going into this and we will do our darnedest to go to our legislator and our congressional delegation to try to put that money back where we used it. With that, Mr. Chair, thanks again and I hope we just continue to help out our residents in our county. It's not just southern now, it's countywide.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Other comments, questions? Staff? Yes, ma'am.

MS. EPSTEIN: One quick question. I'm wondering, and some neighbors and I have been talking about this. Looking for a long-term solution. We are on the private roads. We'd like to know what the process would be to have discussion with the County about the County taking it on as a legitimate County road, and what we might be able to do long term. What's our best course of action? Who do we contact?

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Let me tell you, one of the quickest ways

that we have to do these, and Robert Martinez is in the back there with the Councilor from Edgewood, is our Roads Supervisor and he works under James Lujan, who is our Public Works Director. What we've found - and you're not unique, let me tell you. We have that situation in a number of areas where we don't have enough funds available from the residents to bring the roads up to County standards. Before we can take a road in for maintenance purposes, we have to bring it up to County standards and that as Ira mentioned, it may be \$100,000; it may be more, depending on the road. Seven miles of road, it could be a great deal more than that. What we have done in the past is legislators have appropriated money to help do that. And even though it's not a County road - state funds can't be used for private purposes, for a private road. But what we do is we hold that money in abeyance and we conditionally accept the road for County maintenance, knowing that we have a pot of money over here to use on it. So we conditionally accept it, and then we either contract, or the Public Works Department itself goes to work putting down basecourse and doing drainage and that type of thing. So by using that phasing, that timing mechanism, we've been able to bring some of these private roads up to County standards and then take them over as County roads.

MS. EPSTEIN: So there is some viable mechanism.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: But as with anything in life it starts with the M-word, which is money. So if you can talk to your legislators during the session, which is now. And I think the 15th is the last day for bills to be introduced, and say, we have this problem. Is there anyway that you can provide us some money for at least the critical phase of this? The County may not be able to take seven miles of that road, but maybe they could take the first half.

MS. EPSTEIN: That would be a big help.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: The difficult portion. And if we could get \$50,000 to \$100,000 out of the legislature designated for that extension of 55-A, which we would call it, let's say, then we could go to work and get it upgraded. And once it's upgraded, we can take it on as a County road and continue the maintenance on it in perpetuity. But we have to start with a road that's maintainable. So that's work. And if you can follow up with your legislators - we can - we've done that in the past.

MS. EPSTEIN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: You bet.

MS. LOY SIMMON: I have some simplistic thoughts. I've always asked the telephone company for phone numbers with patterns. Probably the best one I got was 888-3333. But I've learned that if you ask them, they will accommodate getting easy numbers for like emergency numbers. Or even if you got such a number of the public that would call forward to the number that your staff uses. That's another possibility.

I've seen both sides of these cell tower issues. My goodness, don't put it in my backyard. We personally have a water tank in our west pasture that the Estancia Gas Company uses for their radios. We've provided a space for them to put a little pole and they can get reception throughout the Estancia Valley, because there was an area that was

dead for them. Whenever you consider cell towers, perhaps the health and safety issues can become part of you equation, because I know you can't get cell tower reception as you go through Galisteo.

Those of us that have lived here a long time usually prepare for these things. We sit back on our heels and hunker down and wait for the weather to change. Like the gentleman said, come and go when it's frozen. But that's just one simplistic thought. And maybe cell towers would be more helpful, and asking the phone company for simple numbers that we can remember. Thank you again.

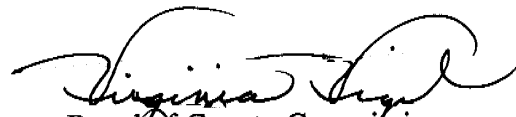
COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: That's a good idea, particularly for our emergency center is to have a number that's maybe a little more easily rememberable than the number we have now. It's kind of hard to remember.

All right. I think, Commissioner Anaya, thanks for bringing these items forward and all of you for being here to give us an update on the issues and all we can say is we're on top of it and we'll keep after it and that's why we pay James the big bucks is to do that, and we're proud of what they do. Thank you.


E. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Vice Chairman Sullivan declared this special meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Approved by:


Board of County Commissioners
Jack Sullivan, Vice Chair

Respectfully submitted:


Karen Farrell, Wordswork
227 E. Palace Avenue
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ATTEST TO:


VALERIE ESPINOZA
SANTA FE COUNTY CLERK

