

SPLIT DECISION

Written by By Molly Adamson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 30 April 2021 03:39

Commissioners break on two points

Confusing terminology and the absence of a speaker led to uncertainty and ultimately, split votes at the April 20 McKinley County Commission meeting.

Nothing seemed amiss when McKinley County's Adult Detention Center Warden Tony Boyd presented the restricted housing quarterly report.

He told commissioners that 14 inmates had been housed in the restricted housing unit between Jan.1 and March 31.

Although the commissioners didn't have to do anything but accept the report, Commissioner Genevieve Jackson, Dist. 2, took the opportunity to voice her disagreement with the idea of restricted housing after Boyd confirmed that restricted housing was another term for what used to be called "solitary confinement."

"I myself don't approve of solitary confinement," Jackson stated. "These people are already troubled, and when you put them alone in a room with no one to talk to, you're only adding to their misery and their trauma."

"I think there are other ways to address these problems," Jackson said.

Commissioners Robert Baca, Dist. 3, and Billy Moore, Dist. 1, approved the resolution, while Jackson voted against it.

Greater Gallup Economic Development Manager Bruce Armstrong was scheduled to speak about designating May 9 - 15 Economic Development Week. However, when he didn't appear at the Zoom meeting, commissioners were hesitant to approve the resolution with the little

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amount of information they had.

County Attorney Doug Decker tried to speak on the subject, but ultimately admitted he didn't know much about what events the GGEDC might have planned for the week.

The commissioners wondered what the events would look like. Jackson suggested that the resolution was probably just more of an acknowledgment that the week would be Economic Development Week. Still, Baca said that without more information, he would not vote for approval.

The resolution passed two to one, with Jackson and Moore voting to acknowledge May 9 - 15 as Economic Development Week.

Finally, all three commissioners approved the agreement between McKinley County and the Navajo Nation for road repair and maintenance.

Decker explained that the previous agreement had expired March 4. The new intergovernmental agreement will last ten years.

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