

## McKinley County OKs four-day work week

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 13 January 2017 04:57

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### **New McKinley County work hours come March: 7 am to 6 pm Mondays - Thursdays**

The McKinley County Board of Commissioners approved a four-day work week venture at its Jan. 3 regular meeting.

The measure was met with some skepticism by newly-elected commissioner Bill Lee who argued that there are people who frequent Gallup specifically on Friday – some of whom do business with the county on that specific day.

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The vote to convert to the new work plan was 2-1. Lee dissented and commissioners Genevieve Jackson and Carol Bowman-Muskett said yes.

“There are people who come here to do their business on Friday’s and they come from far away,” Lee said. “They do other shopping as well and this cuts into that regular and normal schedule.” Lee was joined in opposing the measure by several area realtors and bankers who said not opening on Friday’s would throw a monkey-wrench into the smooth flow of business.

McKinley County Manager Anthony Dimas told commissioners that several staff meetings were held so as to not take employees by surprise with the new measure. Most employees were willing to at least experiment and make the adjustment, he said.

McKinley County Deputy Clerk Marlene Custer warned that in converting to the four-day week, things might not go as easy as anticipated.

“The clerk’s office does not accept cash payments and this would be a problem,” Custer explained.

Custer said those folks dealing with cash would normally be sent to the county treasurer, saying, “that office would be closed.”

Dimas and McKinley County Attorney Doug Decker explained that converting to the four-day work week, which has never been tried at the county, would save on electrical and vehicle use. With the county not knowing what Santa Fe will do with respect to budget cuts and so forth, it makes perfect sense to go with the system right now, Dimas said. He also noted that cutting back a day could lead to less employee layoffs in the future.

Jackson, who in previous meetings argued in favor of the new plan, motioned for the new work week. She noted that it’s an adjustment that folks in and outside of the county would ultimately get used to – just like she got used to when she worked at the Window Rock Unified School District years ago.

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“This is something that we can make work,” Jackson said. “We have to change with the times.”

Dimas and Decker noted that the change won't impact employees at the McKinley County Sheriff's Office or at Metro Dispatch. McKinley's road department is already under such a work plan.

Both Dimas and Decker said there are going to be unexpected happenings, but such things can be dealt with.

The work hours under the four-day work week beginning in March are from 7 am to 6 pm Monday through Thursday. The plan is to operate at the four-day work week for three months and then to decide later if things will be permanent, officials said.

***By Bernie Dotson  
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