

EMERGENCY MEETING

December 8, 2009

The Board of County Commissioners, in and for the County of Otero, State of New Mexico, met in an Emergency Meeting at the Otero County Courthouse in Alamogordo, County and State aforesaid. Meeting called to order by the Vice-Chairman at 2:30 p.m., December 8, 2009; and he announced that reasonable notice for this meeting was given to the Alamogordo Daily News, and to Radio Stations, KPSSA, KINN and KYEE.

Present:

Doug Moore	Vice-Chairman
Clarissa McGinn	Member
Ray Backstrom	County Manager
Pamela Heltner	Commission Liaison
Christina Nuno	Deputy Clerk

Commissioner Moore stated the purpose of the emergency meeting is to declare a weather emergency for the Village of Cloudcroft and Communities in the Sacramento Mountains.

Commissioner Moore made a motion to approve Resolution No. 12-08-09/98-27, regarding Declaration of Weather Emergency for the Village of Cloudcroft and Communities in the Sacramento Mountains. The motion was second by Commissioner McGinn. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Terry Buttram, from the Otero County Electric Cooperative, approached the Board and said a transmission line is down that feeds Cloudcroft and the surrounding mountain areas and areas in Lincoln

County. They have crew all over the service area working on those lines. They have crew coming in from Arizona, Texas and New Mexico to give them a hand. They do know the transmission line is down and expect to have it working within the hour although he stated not to quote him, since he is just the switch man; however, as soon as it's up he will turn it on. Commissioner Moore asked the question when they turn on the main line into Cloudcroft and since there are trees in the hot lines, is there potential for fires, and are they going to bring up the system systematically or all at once. Commissioner Moore stated he did not want them to hit the switch until the wind dies down, because he had concern with the fires. Mr. Buttram stated there is no danger of fire because of last's week's snow which was about two to three feet. He also said they have already patrolled the line once earlier today and they are going to attempt to energize the line as soon as he gets a call that it is up. If it doesn't work at that time, then they will walk the line throughout the county using a bull-dozer. Commissioner Moore asked the question, by night fall will the Village of Cloudcroft have power? Mr. Buttram stated some of the village will, but because they have identified nine places where trees were laying down on the lines it will take longer for the other areas of the Village. Commissioner Moore stated the recommendation to the public if they have an outage to be patient and report the lines that are down to the electric cooperative. Mr. Buttram stated they have provided a 1-800 number and also for the public to please not go near the lines, because they can energize at any time. He said they are taking all the safety pre-cautions and the number one priority is the public and their crew and it would be safer for the public to stay at home and off the roads.

Commissioner Moore stated the Chairman, Ronny Rardin, is in Cloudcroft at the Emergency Operation Center interfacing with the Village of Cloudcroft, the Forest Service, and the National Guard and they are in contact with the Red Cross. He stated the information he has at the present for time the evacuation point for the village and mountain area first stage is the high school gymnasium. If people are in

the flats, and need somewhere to go, through the graciousness of the City of Alamogordo they provided the Sgt. Willie Estrada Civic Center and the Red Cross will be there by 3:30 p.m. to provide services.

Jacque Buchanan, Forest Supervisor Director, with the Lincoln National Forest Service, approached the Board and stated they have their people tied in with the Otero County Electric Cooperative, Paul Quairoli, Emergency Service Coordinator, Ronny Rardin, Otero County Commissioner, Sheriff's Department and Patrick Blue, Lincoln National Forest law enforcement person, their electronic technician who is helping folks with the communication side of it. They also have a snowmobile that they use. Ms. Buchanan stated she has the same recommendation which is safety and they have been telling people that safety is their number one priority with the trees and winds. She also said she checked at their station and High Rolls is experiencing the highest winds 55 mph sustained and wind gust at 70 mph and Cloudcroft is not far behind and they are anticipating that the winds will last through 6:00 p.m. before they start to die down.

Commissioner Moore stated everybody be very careful if you have any questions about your safety or if you have no power go to the evacuation center. He stated that the Sheriff's department is working with the county's E.O.C. (Emergency Operation Center), Lincoln National Forest, and the National Guard. The county's E.O.C. personnel is in Cloudcroft and they are going to try to get into some of the remote areas, because there is still about 30 inches of snow, they are going to use those high clearance vehicles to check on residents to make sure they are ok and if they want to stay or if they don't, then they will be provided with transportation to the evacuation points.

Ray Backstrom, County Manager, stated the Otero County Electric Cooperative did provide to the county's E.O.C. a list of those families in the mountains that have requirements for electricity for health purposes and the county's personnel is working on those issues.

There being no further business before the Board the Vice-Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

APPROVED:

Doug Moore, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Robyn Holmes, County Clerk

Emergency Meeting, December 8, 2009