

McKinley County recognized by New Mexico Association of Energy Engineers

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 07 October 2016 06:06



Project: \$2M estimated in energy-cost savings for county

The McKinley County Board of Commissioners recently received an award from the New Mexico Association of Energy Engineers for the Large Energy Project of the year, officials announced at the Oct. 4 regular commission meeting.

The award recognizes an innovative energy management project that has been in operation for at least six months and can be substantiated with actual installation costs and operating savings.

McKinley County Attorney Doug Decker said the matter stems from a contract between McKinley County and Energy Control Inc. of Rio Rancho for the installation of energy-efficient upgrades at various local buildings.

The contract is valued at about \$2.2 million, Decker said.

The physical award is small and shaped like a glass egg atop a foundation. Decker displayed it at Tuesday's meeting.

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“In some buildings, there were lights changed out and things made brighter, and usage made more efficient as a result,” Decker said. “There is also a cost-savings aspect associated with this that the county receives.”

Decker said county buildings like the new Courthouse at 207 W. Hill Ave. and road lights along U.S. 491 heading toward the Window Rock, Ariz., and Tohatchi interchanges were changed out.

“Over 100 high-density lights were switched out,” Decker said. “We’re talking LED lights that make things a lot brighter.”

Decker noted that Energy Control not only installed new lighting, but replaced a substantial amount of heaters, as well as air conditioning and boiler units in some county buildings. In some cases, road-light poles were installed, he said.

Pat Gibson, vice president of Energy Control, addressed the full commission in June about potential cost-savings. Gibson said at the time that McKinley County exceeded its cost expectations from March 2015 to April 2016. According to Gibson, nearly \$200,000 was saved in electricity and natural gas cost, and a cost-savings report would be presented to the county on an annual basis.

“We got a good product,” Decker said. “That’s always a positive thing.”

Decker said McKinley County Manager Anthony Dimas was among a small contingent of county brass who attended the Sept. 27 award ceremony at the Sandia Resort and Casino in Albuquerque.

EMS

Also at the Oct. 4 regular county meeting, the Board of Commissioners authorized an internal budget adjustment for \$17,000 to be transferred from medical supplies to Thoreau’s ambulance

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budget. The matter was introduced by McKinley County Fire and Emergency Management Office Coordinator Ken Hoffman.

The Board of Commissioners approved a resolution regarding the purchase of a cardiac monitor for the Zuni EMS. Commissioner Carol Bowman-Muskett asked about the function of the equipment.

“This is used to save lives,” Hoffman replied.

The commission panel met in closed session to discuss the disposition of real property personnel issues. No action was taken once the closed session ended.

***By Bernie Dotson
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