



INYO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

TRINA ORRILL • JEFF GRIFFITHS • SCOTT MARCELLIN • JENNIFER ROESER • MATT KINGSLEY

NATE GREENBERG
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

DARCY ELLIS
ASST. CLERK OF THE BOARD



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News Briefs from the Jan. 9 Board of Supervisors Meeting

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

One of the first orders of business for the Inyo County Board of Supervisors in 2024 was electing a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson on Tuesday.

During its first meeting of the year, the Board voted to elect Supervisor Matt Kingsley as Chairperson and Supervisor Scott Marcellin as Vice Chairperson. Kingsley replaces Supervisor Roeser, while Marcellin will serve as Vice Chairperson for the second year in a row.

Marcellin nominated Kingsley for the main position, saying that it was an honor to do so in what will be Kingsley's 12th and final year as a County Supervisor. Marcellin said the nomination was also in deference to Kingsley's experienced leadership in what will be a year filled with major projects and transition.

WELCOME ABOARD

Ten new employees were officially welcomed to the County of Inyo organization on Tuesday when they were introduced to the Board of Supervisors.

The majority of the introductions were made by HHS Director Anna Scott, who recently brought on board the following new staff members: Prevention Program Manager Vanessa Bigham, Prevention Specialist Lizz Darcy, Assistant HHS Director Gina Ellis, Program Service Assistant Lisa Allsup, HHS Specialist Ethan Brown, Parent Partner Stormie DeHaven, Residential Caregiver Jasmin Franco, Office Technician Jeffrey Garrison, and Office Clerk Liisa Woodward.

Sheriff Stephanie Rennie introduced new Shelter Attendant Joseph Mulligan.

HYBRID WATER REPORTING

Inyo County Water Director Dr. Holly Alpert has announced the publication of the 2022-2023 Water Department Annual Report in a hybrid format that accounts for both on- and offline audiences.

The report, which focuses on LADWP operations, groundwater, soil water, and vegetation conditions, used to be published as the *Owens Valley Monitor* newsletter for the first 15 or so years of the Water Department's existence. The newsletter contained short articles covering the various activities of the Water Department and conditions seen on the ground. In later years, and with advancement of technology, the annual report grew in size and was primarily housed on the internet.

On Tuesday, Alpert told the Board of Supervisors that as of 2024, the Water Department will take a hybrid approach to the annual report: a return to the *Owens Valley Monitor* newsletter, with executive summary-type articles, and longer-form report sections and background information that will be posted to the website in their

usual location ([https:// www.inyowater.org/documents/reports/inyo-county-water-dept-annual-report/](https://www.inyowater.org/documents/reports/inyo-county-water-dept-annual-report/)) for those who prefer to get into the weeds, so to speak.

ELECTION APPROACHING

Inyo County Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters Danielle Sexton provided an update Tuesday on the approaching March 5 Presidential Primary Election.

In addition to noting upcoming deadlines involving crossover voting options, Sexton announced her team will be in Olancho to provide early voting services from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on February 14 at the Fire Station, 689 Shop St. Services available on site will include collection of mailed ballots, assistance with crossover voting, registering and re-registering voters, re-issuing ballots, and answering voter questions.

Sexton also announced a 5th District Candidate Forum in Tecopa on Thursday, Jan. 11. The event was organized by Supervisor Matt Kingsley – who is not running for re-election – and is the first of three planned in Southern Inyo. A second forum, sponsored by the Independence Civic Club, will be held in Independence on Monday, Jan. 29 at 5:30 p.m. in the American Legion Hall. The final forum is scheduled for 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31 at Statham Hall in Lone Pine.

For more information about the 5th District race and election deadlines and services, visit <https://elections.inyocounty.us/voting/whats-on-the-ballot/>.

STREAMLINED PERMIT PROCESS IN WORKS

The Board of Supervisors approved the purchase of the OpenGov software platform on Tuesday as part of an effort to shift from paper-based permits to online system for the benefit of both staff and the public.

The software will be purchased for an amount not to exceed \$117,245, of which the City of Bishop will cover 20 percent. Sharing the costs for the purchase is a natural next step, considering the County and City already cost-share to provide Building & Safety personnel through a Memorandum of Understanding. As part of the approval on Tuesday, the Board also approved an amendment to the existing MOU to account for the software. The Bishop City Council approved the MOU on Nov. 27.

The software platform includes online forms, online fee collection, online status updates, and generation of automatic reminders as permit tasks flow from one person or department to another. According to Information Services and Public Works staff, the move will help reduce the processing time of each permit, increase visibility and transparency, reduce uncertainty and time lost during inter-department transitions, reduce the amount of time County and City personnel spend on certain tasks and, ultimately, increase customer satisfaction.

Paper permitting will not be eliminated altogether and staff will still be available in person to serve the public and help them navigate the proper channels.

LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION

On what happened to be Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, Independence resident and business owner Lauralyn Hundley took the opportunity Tuesday to thank the Sheriff's Office for a recent, concerted effort to slow down traffic in the small community by ticketing speeding drivers.

As noted by Sheriff Stephanie Rennie, speeding vehicles have long presented a serious hazard in the communities bisected by U.S. 395, with at least two youth hit by vehicles in Lone Pine in the past year and one individual killed in Independence. She told the Board of Supervisors she assigned newly promoted Lt. Mike Atkins the task of finding solutions, and on Jan. 5, Deputy Phil West organized a traffic enforcement detail in Independence. She said a whopping 54 citations were issued in a matter of hours by both deputies and officers with the California Highway Patrol.

According to Rennie, this was the first of many traffic enforcement details to come. "We will be performing those more regularly throughout all of the towns in the county," she said.

It was noted that no revenue is generated for the County or Sheriff's Office by these special traffic details, as any fines paid by ticketed drivers end up in the court system.

IN MEMORIUM

Supervisor Jeff Griffiths had the sad task Tuesday of announcing to his fellow Board of Supervisors members the passing of former Bishop City Councilman Martin "Smiley" Connolly.

Connolly, founder and longtime owner of Bishop Plumbing, served for nearly 20 years on the Bishop City Council and held the position of Mayor more than once – including during the Bishop Centennial in 2003.

Griffiths fondly recalled serving alongside Connolly. "He was the old guy when I was the kid on City Council when I first got elected," Griffiths said, "and I remember his first piece of advice to me was, 'Kid – don't open your mouth for a year.'"

Connolly was known for his clear-cut approach, sense of fairness, and wry humor. Even after retiring from the Council, Connolly continued to stay involved in civic issues and community projects. He passed away December 6. Griffiths asked that the meeting be adjourned in Connolly's memory.

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