



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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 9, 2023

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Public Relations Liaison Darcy Ellis, (760) 878-0292

Supervisors Meeting Covers Wide Range of Topics

A 7.5-hour meeting on Tuesday saw the Inyo County Board of Supervisors discussing, deliberating, and deciding on a wide array of topics and action items.

Over the course of the meeting, the Board approved a contract with Sierra Life Flight to provide ambulance service in the Bishop area, passed an EMS cost share agreement with the City of Bishop and Bishop Paiute Tribe by a split vote, and temporarily extended a moratorium on short-term rentals to give staff additional time to bring forward suggested regulation changes in the near future.

Numerous, lesser-profile items also took up the Board's attention, including 17 Consent Agenda items that ranged from purchasing road equipment to approving contracts for public services. Following are some of the highlights.

Three-Plus Decades of Assistance

For the 32nd year, the D.A.'s Office has applied for and been awarded a grant from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services for its Victim/Witness Assistance Program. The Board authorized acceptance of the latest grant, in the amount of \$278,144 to cover the period from October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024.

In keeping with past years, the grant funding will help supplement the Victim/Witness Assistance Program which itself augments the services provided by the D.A.'s Office, including: crisis intervention, emergency assistance, resource assistance, follow-up counseling, victim compensation, property return, orientation to the criminal justice system, court escort and support, presentation to criminal justice, victim service providers and the media, case status reports, notification of family and friends, employer notification, restitution assistance, creditor intervention, child care assistance, witness notification, funeral arrangement assistance, crime prevention information, temporary restraining order assistance, transportation, and court waiting area.

Service is provided to victims of all types of crime upon request, not only crimes prosecuted by the D.A. For more information, call (760) 873-6669 (Bishop) or (760) 878-0299 (Independence).

Committee Appointments

The Board filled two vacancies on the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) and approved the appointment/reappointment of several members to the Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC), and also nominated from among its members Supervisors to represent the County in state organizations.

The BHAB, subject to the rules and conditions of the Short-Doyle Act, serves as an advisory entity to the Board of Supervisors and Behavioral Health Director. The BHAB reviews the County Plan for Mental Health Services and reviews and approves the process by which the plan is developed. Recent efforts to recruit individuals to fill four vacancies resulted in requests for

appointment from Lynn Martin and Claude “Pete” Peters. Martin has served for many years on the BHAB and Peters is a newcomer who will be representing veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Various personnel changes and term expirations also required the appointment and reappointment of several individuals to certain seats on the EMCC: Bret Russell to represent the Bishop Volunteer Fire Department; David Alcon to represent the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District; Lisa Davis to represent a Bishop Area EMS Provider (Sierra Life Flight); Joe Capello to represent the Independence Volunteer Fire Department; Chelsea Benbrook to represent the Olancho-Cartago Volunteer Fire Department; Mike Patterson to represent an Air Ambulance Provider (Sierra Life Flight); Pete Schlieker to represent the Big Pine Volunteer Fire Department; Wendy Derr to serve At-Large; and Lorenzo Tovar, to serve At-Large.

The EMCC’s role is to review and report on ambulance service operations, the emergency medical care offered, and first aid practices in Inyo County.

As part of annual business, the Board also voted on appointments to the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) boards of directors. For the second year in a row, Supervisor Trina Orrill will serve as the County’s main CSAC representative and Supervisor Jeff Griffiths as its alternate; and Supervisor Matt Kingsley will serve as the main RCRC representative and Chairperson Jennifer Roeser as the alternate.

Health & Human Services (HHS) and Inyo County Office of Education (ICOE)

Two contracts to distribute State grant funding were approved between Inyo County HHS and the ICOE: one for ICOE’s North Start Counseling Program to provide mental health services and the other for ICOE to help the First 5 Program strengthen the local early learning and care system for young children and their families.

North Star provides low-cost/no-cost school-based early intervention counseling services for students that may not meet the specialty mental health medical necessity criteria for Medi-Cal services. The \$80,000 contract will be used to partially support expanding the program, which includes individual and group counseling for students and families. Through its IMPACT (Improve and Maximize Programs so that All Children Thrive) initiative, First 5 will work with the ICOE to support early childhood care in Inyo County through activities such as coaching, recruitment, data tracking, reporting, and technical assistance. The IMPACT contract was approved in the amount of \$75,404.

Continued Economic Development Work

The Board approved entering a new Memorandum of Agreement with the Rural Southwest Desert Brownfields Coalition to continue efforts to identify and restore land for public or private use.

Inyo County has been a member of RDSBC since 2011, along with Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye, and White Pine counties in Nevada. Membership currently also includes Mineral County and the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe of the Duckwater Reservation in central Nevada. With the goals of protecting the health and welfare of the population and environment and promoting economic development, Coalition members work together to assess, clean up, and facilitate the redevelopment and reuse of potentially contaminated properties known as “Brownfields” throughout the Coalition region.

Projects in Inyo County have included the 3.8 acres at the corner of U.S. 6 and Wye Road where Grocery Outlet and the Clint C. Quilter Consolidated Office Building sit today; the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery; the PPG Industries Bartlett Plant near Owens Lake; and City Hall in Bishop. Work included environmental site assessments and, where necessary, mitigation.

Double Duty

Sandwiched in the middle of Tuesday’s meeting was a hearing before the Inyo County Board of Equalization followed by a meeting of the Inyo County Capital Asset Leasing Corporation, both of which are the Board of Supervisors under different names.

Doubling as Inyo County’s assessment appeal review board, Supervisors heard testimony and deliberated on two appeals filed by Denver Gardens LLC to contest the assessor’s valuation of its property at 910 N. Main St., Bishop for the 2021 and 2022 tax years.

An attorney for Denver Gardens argued that the property – commonly known as the empty Kmart building on Main Street – suffered a decline in value due to ongoing vacancy resulting from sublease restrictions. (It is currently owned by Safeway and leased to Kmart.) The Board of Equalization ultimately concluded the appellant had not met the burden of proof to show fault with the original assessment, sustaining it at \$5,857,249 for both 2021 and 2022. Denver Gardens’ opinion of value had been \$3.86 million and \$3.975 million, respectively.

The Capital Asset Leasing Corporation was formed to issue debt for the 1990 jail and juvenile detention facility project and has had no issuances since 2011. The corporation is required to meet at least once a year in order to remain viable; both Auditor-Controller Amy Shephard and Treasurer-Tax Collector Alisha McMurtrie have recommended against dismantling the corporation so the County is positioned for any debt service that may be required in the future.

Next in Session

The Board’s next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 in the Board Chambers, 224 N. Edwards St., Independence. Agendas, agenda packets, and meeting videos and minutes can be found at <https://inyococa.portal.civicclerk.com/>.

#####