



County of Inyo Board of Supervisors

Special Meeting

August 19, 2013

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Inyo, State of California, met in special session at the hour of 6:00 p.m., on August 19, 2013, in the Bishop City Council Chambers at 377 W. Line Street, Bishop, with the following Supervisors present: Chairperson Linda Arcularius presiding, Jeff Griffiths, Rick Pucci, Mark Tillemans and Matt Kingsley. Supervisor Tillemans led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment The Chairperson announced the public comment period. Skandar, a Bishop Resident addressed the Board to recommend as the Board pursues a new location for County employees in the Bishop area, he would like to get video of the County employee's in their current location for a time capsule. Mr. Shane Huntley of Bishop addressed the Board. He said that in response to the statement about the local benefit of the Consolidated Building, he was concerned that it was just lip service. He went on to talk about the County not giving local contractors greater preference when purchasing goods and services. He noted his personal experience where he had been providing a service to the County and was required to submit a bid when the contract came up for renewal. He said his bid was \$5,000 higher than the only other bid from a Company in Bakersfield and a previous Board had awarded the \$700,000 five-year contract to the Bakersfield Company, thus eliminating the benefit that \$700,000 could generate locally, all for \$5,000.

County Department Reports The Chairperson announced the County Department Report period. Ms. Jean Turner, Director of Health and Human Services updated the Board on a power outage in the southeastern portion of the County as a result of an electrical storm. She said that electricity has been restored to the area and she and her staff were prepared in the event the power outage had continued into the daylight hours. The County Administrator commended the Staff and volunteers that had helped during the recent storm activity that had caused additional flooding and damage to County roads and resulted in the power outage referenced by Ms. Turner. Mr. Carunchio went on to introduce Mr. Clint Quilter, the new Public Works Director, to the audience.

P.W.-CAO/Bishop Consolidated Building The Board received a power point presentation by the County Administrator and the Deputy Public Works Director, Mr. Jim Tatum, on the proposed Bishop Consolidated Office Building, which provided a retrospect of a project that has been considered for nearly 20 years, reviewed the historic context and chronology of events that have transpired on the project since 1998, provided the statistical financial data regarding the currently proposed project; conservative comparison statistics on the amount of money the County currently spends on office space rental in the Bishop area; described the square footage requirements for the building; presented a preliminary space plan design; and that identified alternatives to the size of the building.

The Board heard from the following people regarding the project.

Mr. Greg Lippincott asked about the cost of the building in net present value. Mr. Jim Tatum, Deputy Public Works Director, explained that the information is available and he would provide it to Mr. Lippincott.

Mr. Chuck Kilpatrick questioned whether the size of the building would trigger an increase in government, with the County Administrator explaining that the population of people in Inyo County has not grown in the past four decades, so there is no expectation that the service being required will be expanded.

The Board and staff went on to talk about the proposed plans to utilize the South Street facility for paper storage. They also discussed that the Juvenile and Sheriff's facilities are over twenty years old and they are both maintained in great condition.

Mr. Robert Griffith of Bishop supported the new building, but questioned whether the County had exerted sufficient effort to get into one of the large vacant buildings in Bishop, i.e., KMart building or Cottenwood Plaza. He said he believed the County could have negotiated for the KMart Building for \$3-million and it would only cost about \$2-million to bring it into compliance with what the County needs. He also recommended that the County utilize "eminent domain" to acquire the buildings. Mr. Carunchio reiterated the previous explanation regarding the County's attempts to negotiate with the owners of each of the facilities, with no success.

Ms. Gail Castello of Bishop, expressed her concern with the County building a new facility and leaving the existing leased buildings vacant, which she said would not be beneficial to the City of Bishop. Mr. Jerry Core, talked about his concern with the vacant buildings and talked about the lease he has with the County to provide office space in the City of Bishop. He questioned the prudence of the County's offering him a 2% escalator in the lease he has, when he had not requested it.

Mr. Ed Pittman, Bishop area resident, supported a new building and talked about his experience with leased properties in the Bishop area when he worked for BLM. He talked about the cost of leasehold improvements and how those costs impact the overall leases. He recommended the County pursue green energy for the new building and noted the savings that would be attained once the building has been purchased outright and the County no longer has to pay lease payments to house its workforce in the Bishop area.

Mr. Bill Mitchel, Bishop area resident, expressed his concern about the vacant buildings that will result with the relocation of the County's workforce and said that the vacancies will hurt the community. He suggested the County take another look at utilizing the KMart building or Cottonwood Plaza. He also suggested that if fund raisers could be held to help build a new animal shelter maybe the County could do the same for a new facility.

The County Administrator and a member of the audience discussed the Exclusive Negotiation Agreement and how the agreement benefits the County by providing preliminary project and design services at no cost to the County.

Ms. Sue Stoutenburg, a retired County Public Health Services Employee, addressed the needs of the Health Clinic and strongly supported the Clinic being relocated to the new facility. She talked about the limitations of the current location. Skandar a Bishop area resident, talked about the tour the County had conducted of current office locations and how the office space was inadequate. Mr. Charles Milligan also addressed the condition of the facilities currently housing some of the County's staff's in the Bishop area, suggesting that the South Street facility be torn down and used for parking, and the County obtain modular buildings for records storage.

Mr. Dan Stone, President the O.V. Contractors and Vendors Association, supported the new facility being built noting the benefits that could be derived by local businesses from this project. Pastor Kenton Puls, Bishop area resident, questioned the need for a new facility and suggested some type of "tithing" system be designed so that residents could "tithe" funds to the project.

Ms. Daris Moxley of Bishop, asked about the new Courthouse being proposed in the Bishop area, with the County Administrator explaining that the Courts are under the auspices of the State and the Administrative Office of the Courts and is not a part of the project being proposed by the County. Ms. Moxley then went on to question the condition of the South Street facility, asking why the building was in such bad shape. Mr. Carunchio, explained that the building was over 50 years old. He said that the County had maintained the facility to the best of its ability, but because of its age and size, it was determined to not be sufficient to meet the County's needs both in the past

and presently. Mr. Carunchio also explained that the concept of a consolidated building in the Bishop area has been considered for many years and the practicality of expending a great deal of County funds on a facility that was deemed insufficient for the needs was not prudent. Ms. Moxley suggested that the question of whether to build a new building should be put to a vote of the people.

Mr. Shane Huntley of Bishop, addressed the Board to support the new building. Mr. Gregg Lipponcott addressed the blight that could be caused by leaving buildings vacant in the City of Bishop. The Board Members commented that the County is not intending to relocate any employees (position creep) to Bishop that the new building is planned to house existing staff providing services to the areas residents.

Ms. Nel Hecht, a current County Public Health Services employee, addressed the current location and condition of the Health Clinic and supported having the Health Clinic relocated to the new facility.

Ms. Shirley Fendon, Bishop area resident, suggested that the County was moving too quickly on this facility and suggested that the County slow down and spend more time evaluating the project. She also suggested that the building project be put to a vote of the people. Ms. Tamara Cohn, Bishop area resident, supported the new building.

Mr. Russ Eldridge, Bishop area resident, addressed the Board to oppose the new building, saying that it would be putting future generations into debt. In response to the remarks regarding the cost of the project, the County Administrator, reviewed the cost analysis that was provided earlier in the presentation. He explained how the lease/purchase option works, and how this proposal is going to provide costs saving to the County in the future. Mr. Carunchio also provided further explanation regarding the County owned parcel which is proposed to be traded for the new land at the north end of the City of Bishop.

The Board Members made concluding remarks reiterating the point that this facility is going to provide costs savings, that the two large vacant properties in the City of Bishop were and are not available to the County for the purpose of establishing consolidated office space, that the County is not expanding government, nor is it providing space to relocate employees from other areas of the County.

Adjournment

The Chairperson adjourned the special meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Chairperson, Inyo County Board of Supervisor

Attest: *KEVIN D. CARUNCHIO*
Clerk of the Board

by: _____
Patricia Gunsolley, Assistant