

MINUTES



County of Inyo Board of Supervisors

April 18, 2017

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Inyo, State of California, met in regular session at the hour of 8:30 a.m., on April 18, 2017, in the Board of Supervisors Room, County Administrative Center, Independence, for the start of their Annual Death Valley Meeting with the following Supervisors present: Chairperson Mark Tillemans, presiding, Dan Totheroh, Rick Pucci, and Matt Kingsley. Absent: Jeff Griffiths.

PUBLIC COMMENT Chairperson Tillemans asked for public comment and there was none.

CLOSED SESSION Chairperson Tillemans recessed open session at 8:30 a.m. to convene in closed session with all Board members present except Supervisor Griffiths to discuss the following items: No. 2 **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION**. Initiation of litigation pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (d) of Government Code Section 54956.9 (one case); and No. 3 **CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS** [Pursuant to Government Code §54957.6] – Employee Organizations: Deputy Sheriff's Association (DSA); Elected Officials Assistant Association (EOAA); Inyo County Correctional Officers Association (ICCOA); Inyo County Employees Association (ICEA); Inyo County Probation Peace Officers Association (ICPPOA); Law Enforcement Administrators' Association (LEAA). Unrepresented employees: all. Agency designated representatives: County Administrative Officer Kevin Carunchio, Assistant County Administrator Rick Benson, Deputy Personnel Director Sue Dishion, Information Services Director Brandon Shults, County Counsel Marshall Rudolph, and Assistant County Counsel John Vallejo.

OPEN SESSION Chairperson Tillemans recessed closed session and reconvened the meeting in open session at 9:09 a.m. with all Board members present except for Supervisor Griffiths.

REPORT ON CLOSED SESSION County Counsel Marshall Rudolph reported that no action was taken during closed session that is required to be reported.

RECESS Chairperson Tillemans recessed open session at 9:09 a.m. so that the Board and staff could travel to the Inyo County Library in Cow Creek, Death Valley, for its next agenda item: a tour of the National Park Services facilities at Cow Creek.

*TOUR OF NPS
FACILITIES AT COW
CREEK*

With all Board members except for Supervisor Griffiths, the meeting was reconvened at 11:15 a.m. for a tour of the National Park Service facilities at Cow Creek in Death Valley. Present were County staff and the following from the NPS: Death Valley National Park Superintendent Mike Reynolds, Chief of Resources Josh Hoines, Emergency Services Coordinator Kevin Ross, Max Gallegos with Emergency Services, Chief Ranger Karen McKinley-Jones, and Law Enforcement Supervisor Josh Vann. The tour started with the historic administration building and emergency services building and proceeded on to employee housing and the teacherage. NPS staff told the Board how 47 percent of the County is actually Death Valley National Park, visited by an estimated (conservatively) 1.3 million visitors a year. Reynolds said last year was a record year for visitation and 2017 is already looking like it might top that number. Emergency Services crew members talked about staffing issues due to turnover rates and low recruitment numbers nationwide in the law enforcement and emergency response fields. McKinley-Jones noted that those who are applying for these types of jobs cannot pass the physical or psychological exams. NPS staff also pointed out the Park's solar arrays, maintenance yard, recycling operations, and the nearby school which is closed because of challenges meeting attendance mandates. They also discussed their robust volunteer program that sees professionals from all disciplines, all over the world offering their expertise to the Park on a variety of projects every year. The tour concluded at a public barbecue hosted by the NPS adjacent to the Inyo County Library, after which there was an optional tour of the Nevares Springs and Cabin.

RECESS

Chairperson Tillemans recessed open session at 12:15 p.m. for lunch and so that the Board and staff could travel to the Hurlbut-Rook Community Center in Tecopa for the rest of the scheduled meeting.

RECONVENE

Chairperson Tillemans reconvened open session at 4:04 p.m. at the Hurlbut-Rook Community Center in Tecopa with all Board members present except for Supervisor Griffiths.

*PLEDGE OF
ALLEGIANCE*

Supervisor Kingsley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Tillemans asked for public comment during the second public comment period. Robin Flinchum, president of the governing board of the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District, shared the District's concerns about large vehicles (e.g., commercial trucks) using the community's small roads and switchbacks, causing both damage and safety concerns. She said they were hoping weight limits could be imposed to help prevent wear and tear as well as accidents.

*COUNTY
DEPARTMENT
REPORTS*

Sheriff Lutze provided an update on the three-phase project that was started last year for his Department's communication system. Phase I was replacing the radios in the patrol cars and incorporating extenders for the hand-held radio. He said Phase II includes updating all of the repeater systems, which he said will probably be the best way to improve communications in the Tecopa area. Supervisor Kingsley said he knows the repeater has been an issue, noting that it fails when the power goes out. Sheriff Lutze added that the backup generator has basically given up the ghost and replacing it would mean doing a full Environmental Impact Report.

Public Works Director Clint Quilter reported that Public Works had received funding through a competitive Highway Safety Improvement Program grant and would be using it to put fog lines and center rumble strips on certain routes in Southeast Inyo to help address safety issues.

Interim Planning Director Cathreen Richards noted a Devil's Hole Workshop in relation to the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository project would be held in Beatty, Nev. May 3-5. She also apologized to the Board and people of Tecopa for the Department's failure to get the postcards advertising the recent commercial cannabis meeting to the Post Office. She said it was an honest mistake by Planning staff and added it turned out to be a great meeting with great feedback.

*PRESENTATION –
AMARGOSA
PROPOSED NATIONAL
MONUMENT*

Susan Sorrells, owner of Shoshone Development, Inc., several businesses in Shoshone, and Shoshone itself, joined with Tanya Henderson of the Amargosa Conservancy to present the Board with an overview of efforts to propose the Amargosa River Valley Region National Monument. Sorrells began by describing the economic drivers of Southeast Inyo, which she

said were primarily recreation- and natural resource-based tourism. She noted that, as a fourth generation resident with business interests in the area for almost 30 years, she has watched a once flourishing community, with a mining industry that supported 800 jobs, wither to the point that its school closed and its fire department had to fight for survival. She said there were times when she and her husband could barely make payroll, but have survived by embracing not just tourism but ecotourism, and supporting efforts to protect and preserve the land that draws in tourists. She said many other businesses and organizations, including the schools, chamber of commerce, and museum, are viable again for the same reason. Sorrells said she went so far as to hire a staff naturalist and partnered with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Forest Service on projects like bird refuges and nature trails to, again, protect and preserve the land and offer eco-minded tourists more incentive to explore the area. She said the efforts are working, and the community is booming. She said Shoshone will probably pay the County four times the TOT tax it did last year. Sorrells said the community as a whole has been very active in getting natural resources protected, and cited successful legislative efforts that resulted in the Old Spanish Trail being designated a National Historic Trail and the Amargosa River a Wild and Scenic River. She also noted that there are eight Congressionally designated Wilderness Areas nearby and the BLM recently designated thousands of acres National Conservation Lands – all of which she said is a draw in the ecotourism industry. She cited statistics related to the Rio Grande Del Norte National Monument and its impact on the economy, such as a 30% increase in taxes for the county after three years, 45% increase in jobs, and 55% increase in per capita income. Henderson then reviewed a map of the Amargosa River Valley Region Proposed National Monument, explaining that existing mining claims and the existing route system would not be changed. She said moving forward, the designation would mean that conservation would be put before all other management goals. She offered to make herself available to any residents or Board members who wanted more information about the proposal. Sorrells noted in closing that the Amargosa Conservancy has endorsed a concept of a monument and she feels they have the majority of the support of the community. They are now putting together a prospectus to take to legislators but need the Board's support. Supervisor Kingsley said preserving historic uses in the area is important to him and believes they should be specifically identified as being preserved in any proposal put forth, because it would be that much stronger and more likely to be supported by those stakeholders. Sorrells said the prospectus being developed includes traditional uses and the plan is to have a community meeting so residents can provide specific feedback. She added that the proposal includes a local council that will have input on management of the monument. Supervisor Kingsley said that one lesson learned from the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan is that as these types of proposals progress, local entities have less control as stronger political pressures develop, which is why he suggests listing as many land uses from the start as possible and making it clear those are what the community supports. He noted that BLM officials looked Inyo County officials in the eye on multiple occasions and said there would be no impact on mining, yet one end result of the DRECP was a two-year mining withdrawal. Bottom line, he said, is that the stronger the Conservancy makes its proposal out of the gate, and the more widespread community support it has, the less likely it will be changed through the approval process. Sorrells said she agreed and added it was less than transparent the way the DRECP came to fruition. But she said the beauty of the Amargosa River Valley Region National Monument is that it will come from the community, not Washington or Sacramento, and in general is a much more progressive way of land management. She said Southeast Inyo is a small enclave with few voters but there are ways they can have control over their communities' futures and a monument is one of them. Supervisor Kingsley suggested the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area effort as an example to follow. Sorrells said she works in and for the community and is happy to hear all input. She said the community's strength is working together. Supervisor Kingsley asked whether they had researched the pros and cons of a Scenic Area versus a National Monument. Sorrells said they had and a monument allows for more uses because it can cover a larger area. Members of the audience were given an opportunity to comment. Roger Hickman said the maps don't show the actual geography of the land. Karen Pile said Southeast Inyo has had a history of being treated like a redheaded stepchild, and so have its lands, which she described as the most wonderful on the planet. She said that although she makes a living in Southeast Inyo, she would happily give it up and move to the city if it meant protecting those lands. Crystal Aldridge said her family mined in the area in the 1950s before Death Valley was designated a National Park. They also had other ventures taken away by military bases that were supposed to be "temporary," noting that while sometimes government has good intentions they don't always stay that way. She said she is not against protecting land but rather removing people's access. She said she also enjoys the desert and lives here by choice but thinks the community needs to be very careful about what

kind of control they give the government. She said a stroke of a pen can change people's lives, noting that Death Valley started as a National Monument and when it became a National Park and expanded, miners lost their claims. Supervisor Kingsley said it sounds like residents will be able to really explore the issues at future community meetings.

**CAO-GIS – ONE-TIME
AFTER-SCHOOL
PROGRAM BLOCK
GRANTS**

Moved by Supervisor Pucci and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to approve purchase orders to the following school districts in the following amounts to provide one-time block grants for after-school program's the districts have undertaken or will undertake in the future: Round Valley \$20,000; Bishop \$55,000; Big Pine \$20,000; Owens Valley \$20,000; Lone Pine \$20,000; and Death Valley \$5,000. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

**HHS – EMCC RE-
APPOINTMENTS**

Moved by Supervisor Pucci and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to re-appoint the following two (2) members to serve on the Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC) to complete two-year terms ending December 31, 2018: Carl Dennett of Southern Inyo Fire Protection District and Charles Carson of Lone Pine Volunteer Fire Department. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

**PW – AWARENESS
WALK TEMPORARY
ROAD CLOSURES**

Moved by Supervisor Pucci and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to approve the closures of the intersections of Diaz and Winuba lanes, Diaz and Barlow lanes, Diaz and Tu Su lanes, Diaz and See Vee lanes, as well as the temporary closure of See Vee Lane from Diaz Lane south to the Toiyabe Clinic, on Saturday, June 17, 2017 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., to accommodate an Awareness Walk. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

**PW – TOIYABE GRAND
OPENING
TEMPORARY ROAD
CLOSURE**

Moved by Supervisor Pucci and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to approve the temporary closure of See Vee Lane in Bishop from West Line Street north to Seibu Lane on Thursday, June 20, 2017 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., to accommodate the Grand Opening of the new Toiyabe Indian Health Clinic. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

**SHERIFF – DEPUTY
SHERIFF &
CORRECTIONAL
OFFICER**

Sheriff Lutze said he currently has two openings as the result of a deputy resigning to go work for another agency and a correctional officer vacating the position shortly after being hired. Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Pucci for the Board to find that, consistent with the adopted Authorized Review Policy: A) the availability of funding for these requested positions exists in the General Fund, as certified by the Sheriff and concurred with by the County Administrator and Auditor-Controller; B) where internal candidates may meet the qualifications for the positions and the positions could possibly be filled by an internal recruitment, an open recruitment is more appropriate to ensure the positions are filled with the most qualified applicants; C) approve the hiring of one (1) Deputy Sheriff, Range 67SA-SC (\$4,317 - \$5,791), and authorize up to the D step for a qualified lateral applicant; and D) approve the hiring of one (1) Correctional Officer, Range 64 (\$3,810 - \$4,630). Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

**BOS – WAIVER OF
INVOICE FOR SIFPD
ELECTION FEES**

Supervisor Kingsley noted that the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District (SIFPD) has been struggling and failed twice in the past two years to get a parcel tax approved by voters to improve its financial situation. He said the parcel tax currently in place took four attempts before it was approved. He pointed out that garnering two-thirds of the vote needed is never easy with this kind of tax. Kingsley also noted that, unlike other fire protection districts, the SIFPD relies strictly on property tax for its funding because it was formed after the passage of Prop 13. When the SIFPD unsuccessfully pushed a new parcel tax with Measure E on November 3, 2015, it collected an invoice of \$1,628.74 from the Clerk-Recorder-Registrar of Voters Office for the cost of the election. Kingsley said, with the SIFPD unable to pay, the cost has since been absorbed into the Clerk's budget. He recommended the County waive the invoice. Robin Flinchum, president of the governing board of the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District, thanked Supervisor Kingsley for putting the request on the agenda and thanked the Board for traveling so far to meet with constituents. She noted that despite its financial challenges, the SIFPD has been able to do some amazing things. She said they do a lot of fundraising and while the community is very poor and very small, its members dig deep to support the SIFPD. She said they are able to raise a lot of money but not enough to get ahead financially. She said despite this, two members have been able to raise their status to Advanced EMTs and received training in how to train and recruit other EMTs, successfully recruiting and training EMTs now working in Death Valley National Park and Las Vegas. Flinchum said they are considering expanding these efforts to the Owens Valley. The chief, Carl Dennett, became the first-ever volunteer to receive a meritorious award from the State. She said she feels like the SIFPD is poised on the edge of success, and noted that in those two failed attempts to pass a parcel tax they did

receive a majority vote, just not the two-thirds needed. Dennett said the SIFPD has \$127,000 in expenses and \$87,000 coming in, with the rest needing to be covered by donations which he said come from all over. He talked about the time some firefighters from San Diego were admiring the SIFPD's museum and he had to tell them that was their working fire department. They subsequently made a donation. Dennett said the SIFPD's financial condition is a state of emergency not unlike the "Rocky Road Emergency" and others declared by the Board. Supervisor Kingsley said he hoped SIFPD would do their next parcel tax attempt as part of a general election to save both money and time. Flinchum said the prior elections were the result of inexperienced hubris on their part. Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Pucci to waive the invoice for the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District Measure E election, held on November 3, 2015, in the amount of \$1,628.74. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*MOTOR POOL –
VEHICLE DONATION
TO SIFPD*

Before the start of discussions, Chairperson Tillemans announced a correction to the agenda item, noting that the agenda should state the year of the vehicle as 2010 not 2019. Assistant County Administrator Rick Benson explained that the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District had contacted the County and asked if they had a vehicle that it no longer needed and could donate. Benson said Motor Pool was preparing for an auction of surplus vehicles and found a 2010 Ford Expedition that SIFPD might be able to use. He noted that, coincidentally, it had been used as the Southeast Inyo sheriff patrol unit. He said the County could maybe get \$2,500 for it at auction. Supervisor Kingsley said he supports the donation and believes the SIFPD Chief will find it very useful since he travels so much for training. Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to: A) declare one 2010 Ford Expedition (Asset No. 8841) as surplus and no longer required for County use; and B) approve the donation of said vehicle to the Southern Inyo Fire Protection District pursuant to Government Code Section 25365. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*PARKS & REC –
TECOPA HOT
SPRINGS RATE
INCREASES*

Assistant County Administrator Rick Benson reported that when the Board awarded the concession of Tecopa Hot Springs about two years ago to the Tecopa Hot Springs Conservancy, the agreement gave the Conservancy the ability to change and raise rates charged at the Hot Springs as long as the Board gave its consent and the rates are comparable with charges at similar operations. Benson noted that a rate study was produced and included in the Board's agenda packets. He also pointed out that the rate for locals remains at \$0. Most increases, he said, are for short-term users passing through the area, and are comparable or below what is charged at other facilities in the area. Supervisor Totheroh asked what constitutes a "local." Ryan Thomas, Conservancy Executive Director, asked to address the Board. He said that, historically, the rate for locals was not free; it was \$7 and then \$5. He said the Conservancy felt that people who live, work, and own businesses in the area – people who contribute to the betterment of the community – should be able to reap the benefits. He also noted the \$7 a day charge was a hardship for some people. He said the Conservancy basically subsidizes locals' use of the springs. Chairperson Tillemans said the rates seem reasonable and directed and targeted in a fair way. Supervisor Kingsley agreed, and asked the audience whether the claims about the springs being the second most healing in the world are true. Karen Pile, who identified herself as a health practitioner who works specifically in matters related to waters, said every hot spring has its own unique mineralogical footprint, and this particular hot spring is one of the best in the world for the treatment of pain. Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Pucci to approve new rates as requested by and to be charged by Tecopa Hot Springs Conservancy. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*LAND OF EVEN LESS
WATER EMERGENCY*

CAO Carunchio reported that on April 7, the Governor ended the drought emergency in California. Staff was subsequently prepared to recommend the Board end the Land of Even Less Water Emergency but remembered that it had been amended in 2016 to include the unusual, drought-related hydrological conditions plaguing West Bishop. As such, Carunchio said, staff is recommending the Board continue the emergency until staff can further amend the proclamation to account for the end of the drought but also the continued existence of the West Bishop conditions. Staff was directed to begin work on the amended proclamation. Moved by Supervisor Pucci to continue the local emergency known as the "Land of EVEN Less Water Emergency" that was proclaimed as a result of extreme drought conditions that have, until recently, existed in the County, while considering how to address ongoing hydrological issues in West Bishop. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*HERE IT COMES
EMERGENCY*

CAO Carunchio offered an update on efforts to pre-plan for the severe runoff this spring and summer. He mentioned the last multi-agency pre-planning meeting was 180 degrees different from the last one, with LADWP staff (including a lot of old, familiar faces) showing up in force. He also referenced a letter the Board received late last week from LADWP Aqueduct Group Manager Jim Yannotta as a follow-up to questions asked and concerns raised by the Board at a special meeting hosted by the Board April 7 to meet with high-level LADWP and City of Los Angeles officials. Carunchio pointed out two responses of note: LADWP said it looked into the request to begin clearing tules now from the Lower Owens River to get ahead of the runoff and determined, based on observations from recent pulse flows, that the tules actually have a positive effect by slowing the water and helping to spread it across the floodplain; and LADWP, rather than submit all waivers and requests for variances through the Incident Command Structure, said it will provide copies of those requests. Carunchio said it appears Los Angeles is now essentially saying tules are a good thing, and is entering uncharted territory by not sending its requests through the agency that declared the State of Emergency. He said such actions could have long-term negative implications. He said staff would be working with County Counsel on a response. Carunchio distributed to the Board graphs for each creek in the valley for high runoff years 1969 and 1983 showing temperature and flow rates. He said the information was distributed to all agency partners yesterday and they were asked to start identifying concerns and what the trigger flows might be for infrastructure damage. He noted that 20,000 sand bags have been ordered. Sheriff Lutze said his staff share Carunchio's sentiments about a productive pre-planning meeting and said his office now had the data it needed to work from and just prayed there wouldn't be a catastrophic rain incident to accelerate runoff. He also noted that the refusal to submit regulatory waivers through Incident Command is a huge concern to him. Public Works Director Clint Quilter spoke about his department's efforts to clear ditches and bypasses, and said staff monitored the recent pulse flow on the Lower Owens River to get an idea of what might happen when the runoff starts in earnest. He concurred that the meeting the Board had with the LADWP higher-ups made a positive difference in pre-planning relations. Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to continue the local emergency known as the "Here It Comes Emergency" that was proclaimed in anticipation of run-off conditions from near-record snowpack posing extreme peril to the safety of property and persons in Inyo County. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*ROCKY ROAD
EMERGENCY*

Public Works Director Quilter said they may remove the soft closure on Whitney Portal Road the first part of May. He said they have been trying to schedule with the Forest Service a meeting regarding an emergency opening plan for Horseshoe Meadow Road. Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Pucci to continue the local emergency known as the "Rocky Road Emergency" that was proclaimed as the result of flooding, mud, and rock landslides and deep snow drifts over portions of Inyo County caused by an atmospheric river weather phenomena that began January 3, 2017 and continued throughout February. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*GULLY WASHER
EMERGENCY*

Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to continue the local emergency known as the "Gully Washer Emergency" that resulted in flooding in the central, south and southeastern portion of Inyo County during the month of July, 2013. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*DV DOWN BUT NOT
OUT EMERGENCY*

Moved by Supervisor Pucci and seconded by Supervisor Totheroh to continue the local emergency known as the "Death Valley Down But Not Out Emergency" that was proclaimed as a result of flooding in the central, south and southeastern portion of Inyo County during the month of October, 2015. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

*BOS – HR 975
DISCUSSION*

Chairperson Tillemans introduced an item to discuss and approve sending a letter requesting Congressman Cook's support of the Respect State Marijuana Laws Act of 2017, or HR 975. CAO Carunchio noted that the status of the federal position and its impact on local laws was something brought up by residents during a lot of the recent community cannabis meetings hosted by the Planning Department. County Counsel Rudolph explained that HR 975 would basically amend the Controlled Substances Act to exempt any state that has legalized marijuana. Supervisor Pucci said this is the first time he is hearing about this and wasn't prepared to make a decision before discussing related issues like LADWP's position on ag lessees growing cannabis and the discrepancy in what local Tribes support with regard to cannabis. Supervisor Kingsley said he liked that the legislation was proposed but wanted more

opportunity to research through the Rural County Representatives of California whether there is similar legislation, and which one is the best before asking a Congressman to support it. Chairperson Tillemans said the County would want to make sure they were supporting the right legislation, and added it would be great to have Supervisor Griffiths be part of the conservation as well. CAO Carunchio explained to the Board that the request was put on the agenda rather last-minute because there is a proposal to have the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments consider sending a letter of support at its April 21 meeting, and he wanted to make sure the Board had a chance to discuss it first so there wasn't a major lapse in the democratic process.

*PLANNING –
PRESENTATION –
SOUTHEAST INYO
SPECIFIC PLANS*

Interim Planning Director Cathreen Richards gave a presentation on the status of f the Specific Plans for Charleston View, Tecopa, and Shoshone. She explained the nexus of the plans, which stemmed from a Solar Energy Development Area being established for Charleston View, as well as how they were started. She said Existing Conditions Reports were prepared with the help of community members (based on input gathered at public workshops) and included topics such as history and setting, demographics, business community, area attractions, zoning, actual land use, transportation, cultural, hydrological, biological and visual resources, and issues and opportunities. She said staff presented these reports to the Planning Commission and then the Board last May, as well as the community during Visioning Workshops where residents illustrated on maps what they wanted their communities to look like and helped staff draft vision statements for each community. Richards said residents came up with really interesting and neat vision statements. She said the Planning Department is behind on follow-up work because of staffing issues but hopes to work through the spring and summer to respond to public comments and put out the maps. Chairperson Tillemans invited audience input. Roger Hickman said it's not true that Tecopa's water is not potable because anyone in Tecopa Heights who has their own well has potable water. Supervisor Kingsley said he really wanted to stress that this is an important effort and hoped everyone understands the County has a small staff in Planning right now working on other projects, cannabis being one of them, but another planning meeting in Southeast Inyo is planned for the fall. He said he knows that seems like a long time but his hope is the development of a good Specific Plan for each community. Hickman offered input on cannabis, saying the County should allow it liberally in Southeast Inyo and regulate it tightly in the rest of Inyo to appease who the Board has to. He said if there's a way to maneuver cannabis sales to support the fire department they should do it. Crystal Aldridge thanked the Board for providing Internet at the Community Center and said she knows travelers appreciate it too because there is no cell service in Tecopa. She said somebody needs to figure out a way to get a tower placed there because somebody's going to die as a result of no phone service one day. Chairperson Tillemans said with regard to the delay of the Specific Plans, the Board supported them as budget item and they are a priority.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Tillemans asked for public comment during the final public comment period. Larry Levy of Tecopa encouraged the Board to continue some sort of legislation like the Respect State Marijuana Laws Act of 2017 because he thinks all states that have legalized marijuana are looking over their shoulders since it is ultimately up to the whim of the federal government – specifically individual administrations – whether they'll be safe from prosecution.

*BOARD MEMBERS
AND STAFF REPORTS*

Interim Planning Director Richards mentioned outstanding issues for the Planning Department, including short-term vacation rentals.

Supervisor Pucci thanked the residents in the audience for coming to the meeting.

Supervisor Totheroh also thanked the residents for attending, and reported he would be attending a Local Transportation Committee meeting in Lone Pine tomorrow.

CAO Carunchio reported on the progress of the Tecopa Water Vending Project, noting the last hurdles will be permits before construction.

Public Works Director Quilter said water vending project contractor Spiess Construction will be in Tecopa next week.

Chairperson Tillemans said he had been asked by the Toiyabe Indian Health Clinic to say a few words on behalf of the Board at the ribbon-cutting for the new clinic, and would be attending the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments and Eastern Sierra Transit Authority meetings on Friday and Eastern Sierra Area Agency on Aging next Wednesday.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Tillemans adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 25 at the County Administrative Center in Independence.

Chairperson, Inyo County Board of Supervisors

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

by: _____
Darcy Ellis, Assistant