

# MINUTES



# County of Inyo Board of Supervisors

**May 15, 2020**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Inyo, State of California, met in special session at the hour of 12:10 p.m., on May 15, 2020, in the Board of Supervisors Room, County Administrative Center, Independence, with the following Supervisors present via videoconferencing per California Governor Executive Order N-25-20: Chairperson Matt Kingsley, presiding, Dan Tothoroh, Jeff Griffiths, Rick Pucci, and Mark Tillemans.

*Pledge* Chairperson Kingsley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

*Public Comment* Chairperson Kingsley asked the Assistant Clerk of the Board whether there was any public comment emailed for today's meeting for items not calendared on the agenda.

The Assistant Clerk of the Board reported that no comments were submitted in writing for any items not on today's agenda.

*HHS-Public Health & Prevention – Stage 2 Attestation* HHS Public Health presented a request to the Board that it attest that Inyo County meets the State of California's readiness criteria to move through the Second Stage of Reopening at its own pace. The item was previously brought forward for Board consideration on May 8; however, HHS needed to do additional work on its variance request following an update from the Governor on May 7. HHS Director Marilyn Mann and HHS Deputy Director-Public Health Anna Scott reviewed via PowerPoint the metrics Inyo County must meet and/or demonstrate in order for the variance to be approved by the State. Assistant County Administrator Leslie Chapman reviewed for the Board the Phase 2 reopening steps businesses must take before self-attesting that they have met all safety criteria and are ready to open. Public Health Officer Dr. James Richardson said Inyo County has not had a positive coronavirus case in 28 days and he is confident the county can maintain the status if the County opens up safely and at a measured pace.

Supervisor Pucci said every reopening businesses will be attesting to the safety measures they have taken, and it's important to get the message across that businesses who fail to follow through will be jeopardizing all businesses' ability to reopen. He said the public likewise needs to cooperate with the required measures. Supervisor Griffiths acknowledged the hard work of Public Health staff and Assistant CAO Chapman in getting the County to this point. He reiterated that for the Stage 2 reopening, and future openings, to be successful, there has to be an overriding ethic of doing things in a safe way that will give the public and visitors confidence to patronize these businesses and that Inyo County is being as responsible and safe as possible. Supervisor Tillemans said he liked the plan put forth by Public Health, adding that he believes Inyo County has been too cautious, to its detriment, and that even more businesses should be allowed to reopen. He said Inyo County does have the opportunity to rebound quickly when tourists start bringing in money again. Chairperson Kingsley sought clarification on what it means when businesses sign their self-attestation. Staff reported that they are essentially saying they are making a statement that is true. Assistant CAO Chapman noted that permission to reopen will be granted on a trust system since the County cannot inspect every single business. Supervisor Tothoroh said he believed in the concept of "trust but verify," and that as Inyo County has the capacity, staff occasionally makes verifies the businesses are following the rules.

Chairperson Kingsley asked the Assistant Clerk of the Board whether there was any public comment emailed for this discussion. The Assistant Clerk of the Board read aloud a comment letter from Lynne Greer, expressing concern about dispersed camping getting out of hand because campgrounds are closed. She also said the County and its people will lose everything if Inyo doesn't reopen.

The Board and staff engaged in discussion about dispersed camping and the possibility of sending a letter to the Governor to ask for campgrounds to reopened in Stage 2.

The Assistant Clerk of the Board received two additional emails commenting on the discussion. Dr. Stacy Brown wrote that he agreed with Supervisor Totheroh's "trust but verify" position because Inyo County can't rely on social media shaming or word-of-mouth to protect the populace from customers and business owners not following public health guidelines. An individual who identified as "California Skier" wanted to know whether Inyo County has coordinated with Mono County to open fishing season prior to June 1. Staff noted the priority right now is getting the Stage 2 variance approved, and then discussions could continue about fishing opener.

Via Zoom, public comment was received from Tim Villanueva who asked whether the County will be doing more testing in order to monitor potential issues. Dr. Richardson said right now all symptomatic individuals are being tested and asymptomatic testing was a possibility for the future.

Supervisor Griffiths received a question via text from an individual named "Charles" who wanted to know if non-compliant businesses would be cited or shut down. Mann responded that the County's first goal is encouraged voluntary compliance, but there are provisions within the Health Officer's orders allowing for citations.

Moved by Supervisor Griffiths and seconded by Supervisor Tillemans to authorize the Chairperson to sign a letter of support of a COVID-19 Local Variance Attestation made by the Inyo County Public Health Officer of Inyo County's readiness to move through Stage 2 of California's Roadmap to Modify the Stay-at-Home Order at an increased pace. Motion carried unanimously.

*Adjournment*

Chairperson Kingsley adjourned the meeting at 1:42 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 19, 2020 in the County Administrative Center in Independence.

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Chairperson, Inyo County Board of Supervisors

*Attest: CLINT G. QUILTER  
Clerk of the Board*

by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Darcy Ellis, Assistant*