

MINUTES



County of Inyo Board of Supervisors

April 26, 2024

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Inyo, State of California, met in special session at the hour of 1:08 p.m., on April 26, 2024, in the Board of Supervisors Room, County Administrative Center, Independence and Room 101, Consolidated Office Building, Bishop. The following Supervisors were present: Chairperson Matt Kingsley, presiding (Independence), Scott Marcellin (Bishop), Jeff Griffiths (Bishop), and Jennifer Roeser (Truckee, per Government Code 54953[j][2][D]). Also present: County Administrator Nate Greenberg, Assistant County Counsel John-Carl Vallejo, and Assistant Clerk of the Board Darcy Ellis. Absent: Trina Orrill. In attendance from the Inyo County Water Commission: Randy Keller (Independence), Dan Berry (Independence), and Vikki Glinskii (Bishop).

Pledge of Allegiance Inyo County Water Commissioner Randy Keller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment The Chairperson asked for public comment related to items not calendared on the agenda and public comment was received from Lauralyn Hundley.

CAO-Public Defender – Elizabeth Corpora Contract Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Roeser to ratify and approve the agreement between the County of Inyo and Elizabeth Corpora for the provision of public defender services in an amount not to exceed \$230,000 for the period of April 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, and authorize the Chairperson to sign, contingent upon all appropriate signatures being obtained. Motion carried unanimously 4-0 with Supervisor Orrill absent.

Water Dept. – 24-25 LADWP Annual Operations Plan Water Director Dr. Holly Alpert presented an overview of the 2024-2025 LADWP Annual Operations Plan and LADWP's proposed range of pumping amounts (51,470 to 77,413 acre-feet), as well as staff's recommended response (due within 10 days of receipt of the plan). She said staff recommended supporting the minimum pumping amount specified: 51,470 a.f. She noted that last year, pumping levels were the lowest they've been since 1970 – about only half of the average acre-feet and less than LADWP initially forecast. She noted that this year is forecast to be average. She said vegetation overall responded well to the especially wet year last year, including the 200,000-plus a.f. of water LADWP spread throughout the valley. However, it was noted and discussed in some detail by both members of the Board and Water Commission that shrubs are coming back, not the grasses specified in the Long-Term Water Agreement. Board members also mentioned that the baseline conditions in the LTWA were based on conditions from the mid-1980s, when pumping was especially egregious.

Public comment was heard from Sally Manning of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe, Wendy Schneider with Friends of the Inyo, Big Pine Tribe Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Danelle Gutierrez, Lynn Boulton, Teri Cawelti (in her capacity as a private citizen and not a member of the Water Commission since she was unable to attend), Noah Williams, Jon Klusmire, and Nancy Masters.

Comments focused on the need to aggressively press LADWP on the vegetation issue and to recommend a lower pumping amount than LADWP's forecasted minimum. It was noted that water from wet winters should be kept in the valley to continue helping with recharge and to act as a buffer in dry years.

Chairperson Kingsley said that the response letter should mention that a high runoff year shouldn't mean additional water exports. He said wet years like 2023 should be seen as an opportunity to improve the health of the wellfields. He added that the letter should note baseline is just that – the bare minimum – and LADWP needs to strive to restore above baseline conditions. Supervisor Griffiths agreed, adding that the County needed to push for

the use of surface water for mitigation projects rather than groundwater, where feasible. Supervisor Roeser cautioned about water spreading contributing to higher mosquito populations, and encouraged collaborative groundwater modeling and strategic mowing.

The Board directed the Water Department to proceed with its response, recommending support of the lower proposed pumping amount of 51,470 a.f., with the additions as suggested by Board members.

Workshop with Water Commission

The Chairperson opened a workshop with the Inyo County Water Commission. Commissioners Keller and Berry made their comments during the last Board agenda item and had nothing new to discuss. Commissioner Glinskii suggested the County look into the water-mining clause in the Water Agreement.

Public Comment

Chairperson Kingsley asked for public comment related to items not calendared on the agenda and public comment was received from Sally Manning.

Adjournment

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 2:53 p.m. to 9 a.m. Friday, May 3, 2024, in the County Administrative Center in Independence.

Chairperson, Inyo County Board of Supervisors

*Attest: NATE GREENBERG
Clerk of the Board*

by: _____
Darcy Ellis, Assistant