

State of California, County of Siskiyou

Board of Supervisors Minutes, March 4, 2025

The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Siskiyou County, California, met in regular session this 4th day of March 2025; there being present Supervisors Jess Harris, Michael N. Kobseff, Nancy Ogren and Ray A. Haupt, County Administrator Angela Davis, County Counsel Natalie E. Reed and County Clerk and ex-Officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Laura Bynum by Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winningham. Supervisor Ed Valenzuela was absent.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ogren. Pursuant to AB23, the Clerk announced that the Board members receive no additional compensation for sitting as members of the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and County Service Area 3. Disaster Services Coordinator Owen Cabo Dal Molin led in the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

Invocation - Siskiyou County Sheriff Chaplain Keith Bradley provided an invocation.

Presentations from the Public

Supervisor Kobseff clarified a discussion held during the February 18, 2025 Board meeting concerning the Behavioral Health Services Division's request to approve a Mental Health Student Services Act Universal Screening grant application, advising that the surveys that were discussed would be completed by teachers rather than students. Supervisor Kobseff voiced support for parents being notified regarding the anticipated survey process involving their children. Additionally, Supervisor Kobseff shared concerns that schools receive a large portion of the taxes received by the County and concerns regarding the funding from Behavioral Health as a subsidy to the schools. Supervisor Kobseff requested a process in which he could reconsider his earlier approval of the grant application request.

In response, County Counsel Natalie E. Reed advised that an option would be for the Board Chair to direct Human Services' staff to bring an item concerning the grant application request to the Board on a future agenda for additional information and/or discussion.

Supervisor Haupt spoke in support of the item coming back before the Board.

Health and Human Services Agency Director Sarah Collard appeared before the Board and Chair Ogren directed that the item in question regarding the Mental Health Student Services Act Universal Screening grant application be brought back to the Board on a future agenda.

Consent Agenda – Approved.

At Supervisor Haupt's request, item 5B, County Administration's letter to the US Forest Service providing comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Northwest Forest Plan Amendment was pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

At Supervisor Kobseff's request, item 5C, the County Library's request to apply and accept grant funding from the California State Library, and item 5F, Public Health Division's Resolution authorizing the acceptance of the allocation award under the Program Letter 24-01, were pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

It was moved by Supervisor Kobseff, seconded by Supervisor Harris and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT, that the following consent agenda is approved, and the Chair and/or clerk authorized to execute/record any necessary documents:

County Administration

Approve the donation of a total of six paper towel dispensers to the Dunsmuir, Tulelake and Etna Branch libraries.

Facilities Management

Accept the Notice of Completion for the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisor Chambers Remodel project, County Contract 23-107010-02, by the Board Chair signing and directing the Clerk of the Board to record the notice within five days.

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Consent Agenda – (continued)

Health and Human Services - Behavioral Health Division

Approve Behavioral Health's donation of paper to Yreka Union School District as they have a current need for paper supplies.

Health and Human Services - Public Health Division

Approve and authorize the Chair to sign the First Addendum to the Contract for Services between Siskiyou County Health and Human Services Agency – Public Health Division and Community Initiatives for Collective Impact, Corporation to increase the compensation to \$109,200.00 and extend the term of the contract through June 30, 2027.

Office of Emergency Services

Approve (adopt) the Resolution 25-28 to authorize the Director of Emergency Services, the County Administrative Officer, or Deputy County Administrative Officer to execute for and on behalf of the named applicant, a public entity established under the laws of the State of California, any actions necessary for the purpose of obtaining federal financial assistance provided by the federal Department of Homeland Security and sub awarded through the State of California for the following Grant Awards: 2024 Homeland Security Grants Program (HSGP), 2024 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG), 2025 Homeland Security Grants Program (HSGP), 2025 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG), 2026 Homeland Security Grants Program (HSGP), 2026 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG).

Transfer of Funds - Predatory Animal Control - \$5,162. Resolution 25-29 adopted.

County Administration - Approve draft letter to US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region All Units providing comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Northwest Forest Plan Amendment, with the Chair authorized to sign with final edits. Approved.

This item was pulled from the consent agenda at Supervisor Haupt's request. Supervisor Haupt spoke in support of the letter and thanked the County staff who drafted the letter. Additionally, Supervisor Haupt shared concerns regarding the proposed Forest Plan Amendment, advising that the Plan falls short in supporting the County's local rural communities.

Deputy County Administrator Elizabeth Nielsen appeared before the Board, advising that there were minor edits needed prior to the letter being sent to the Forest Service before the March 17, 2025 deadline.

It was moved by Supervisor Haupt, seconded by Supervisor Kobseff and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT, to approve the letter to US Forest Service providing comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Northwest Forest Plan Amendment, and authorize the Chair to sign with final edits.

County Library - Authorize the application and acceptance of grant funds, in the amount of \$26,000 from the California State Library, Library Services and Technology Act grant program, for a "Play for All" project at the Tulelake Library Branch. Approved.

This item was pulled from the consent agenda at Supervisor Kobseff's request.

County Librarian Teresa Johnson appeared before the Board.

In response to Supervisor Kobseff regarding clarification of the County as the grant holder rather than the Tulelake Library Branch, Ms. Johnson advised that the California State Library requested that the County be the official representative for the grant. In addition, Ms. Johnson advised that she as Librarian would manage the grant and funding to the Library Branch.

Following brief discussion between Supervisor Kobseff and Ms. Johnson regarding the anticipated process should the grant need to be paid back, it was moved by Supervisor Kobseff, seconded by Supervisor Ogren and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT, to approve (authorize) applying for the grant, accept the grant funds and authorize the Auditor's office to establish budget as necessary. We are requesting \$26,000.00 in grant funds for the project.

Health and Human Services - Public Health Division - Approve request to adopt a Resolution authorizing the acceptance of the allocation award under the Program Letter 24-01 for County of Siskiyou, for two-year extension of FY 25/26 and 26/27 Agreement # CTCP 21-47 from California Department of Public Health's California Tobacco Control Program, increasing allocation by \$600,000 to a total not to exceed \$1,650,000 with spending authority through June 30, 2027. Resolution 25-30 adopted.

This item was pulled from the consent agenda at Supervisor Kobseff's request.

Health and Human Services Agency Director Sarah Collard appeared before the Board.

In response to Supervisor Kobseff regarding the behaviors targeted by the Tobacco Prevention Program (tobacco use, vaping, drug use), Ms. Collard advised that the Public Health Division's program targeted tobacco and vaping and that the Behavioral Health Division had programs to target drug usage.

Discussion followed between Supervisor Kobseff and Ms. Collard regarding the Countywide Tobacco Prevention Program, the process for Public Health staff to work with local schools' staff to implement the Program, the process for facilitating the Program's grant funding and, if necessary, positions that would be deleted should supporting grant funding go away.

Supervisor Kobseff requested information regarding the amount of funding utilized for preventive activities versus staffing related funding.

This item was continued, in order for Ms. Collard to gather the requested information.

Later in the meeting, Ms. Collard appeared back before the Board.

Following discussion between Ms. Collard and Supervisor Kobseff regarding the 1.5 – 2.0 FTE Public Health positions funded by this increased grant allocation, carry over from another grant to accommodate additional staffing, the funding for preventive activities and the need for additional information related to the percentage of funding for staffing versus activities, it was moved by Supervisor Haupt, seconded by Supervisor Ogren and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT, to approve and authorize the Chair to sign Governing Board Resolution 25-30 with the State of California – Health and Human Services Agency – California Department of Public Health (CDPH) California Tobacco Control Program (CTCP) to extend the term to FY 25/26 and FY 26/27, increase the allocation by \$600,000.00 for Agreement Number CTCP-21-47, authorize the County Administrator to act on behalf of the County to execute any and all program award documents as outlined in Section 2 of the Resolution and authorize the Auditor to establish budget appropriation and set expenditures per the agreement amendment guidelines, for a total allocation of \$1,650,000.00, with spending authority through June 30, 2027.

County Administration - Discussion, direction and possible action re the FY 2024-25 mid-year Budget Review, FY 2025-26 Budget Principles and Budget Calendar. Budget Principles and Calendar approved.

Deputy County Administrator/Chief Fiscal Officer Sherry Lawson appeared before the Board and provided an overview of the request, advising that the Budget Principles were unchanged from the previous year. Ms. Lawson summarized the process of working with County departments and their mid-year budget projections, advising that an anticipated budget deficit of \$588,000 would be addressed through the use of one-time funds during Recommended Budget. Ms. Lawson further advised of ongoing efforts to monitor non-General Fund budgets, and shared concerns regarding potential increased Risk Management and PRISM costs. Ms. Lawson additionally shared concerns regarding the unknowns associated with State and Federal budgets and potential negative impacts to the County.

Discussion followed between members of the Board, Ms. Lawson and County Administrator Angela Davis regarding the need for additional information regarding CalPERS' Other Post Retirement Benefits (OPEB) shortfall, the impact of dam removal activities on property taxes, enforcement efforts concerning Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) taxes and dam removal activities that the County should have been reimbursed.

Supervisor Kobseff voiced concerns regarding the anticipated use of one-time funds to balance the 2025-26 budget and requested information from County departments regarding possible revenue generating activities to off-set the costs of doing business.

In response to Ms. Lawson, Supervisor Kobseff requested that revenue generation be included in the County's Budget Principles.

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County Administration – (continued)

Following brief discussion regarding the availability of one-time funds and the remaining funds balance, it was moved by Supervisor Kobseff, seconded by Supervisor Haupt and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT to approve the FY 2025-26 Budget Principles and FY 2025-26 Budget Calendar.

Ms. Davis advised that the recommended revenue generation would be included in the Budget Principles.

Sheriff - Discussion, direction and possible action re request to issue payment to the State of California, in the amount of \$100,000 in order to resume ownership of needed boating patrol equipment. Item continued to March 18, 2025 with direction to the Sheriff and staff to attempt to negotiate with the State regarding either return of a boat to the State or payback of the grant funds.

Sheriff Jeremiah LaRue appeared before the Board, providing an overview of the request. Sheriff LaRue advised that when the Department applied for a grant in 2021, one boat/vessel in the County's possession was inadvertently left off of an inventory list required by the grant and the State. Sheriff LaRue shared concerns that the State was now withdrawing the grant award (\$100,000) and requesting repayment or return of the procured equipment (a 2023 Rogue Fastwater vessel and trailer). Sheriff LaRue advised that the Department has non-General Fund monies (Rural County Sheriff funds) in a discretionary account from which the payback could be made.

Discussion followed between members of the Board and Sheriff LaRue regarding a larger, sea-faring boat that the County gained possession of in previous years, the 2023 Rogue Fastwater vessel that the Sheriff wished to keep possession, the State's refusal to accept the larger boat in lieu of the grant payback and the State's March 19, 2025 payback deadline.

Administrative Services Manager Courtney Greenley appeared before the Board, advising that the State conducted a site inspection to determine what, if any, equipment the County could be underutilizing or does not need (the larger sea-faring vessel) in an effort to reduce costs associated with the Department's boating safety program.

Further discussion followed, including Ms. Greenley and Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winingham, regarding the Department's time line for providing the State with inspection information, the County as Title holder and the State as Lien holder of boats/vessels, the potential benefits associated with requesting legislative assistance with the matter, the need to attempt to negotiate or speak with the State prior to the payback deadline and the need to continue this item to the next regular Board meeting.

It was the consensus of the Board to continue this item to the March 18, 2025 meeting and direct the Sheriff to negotiate with the State regarding the payback request, with members of the Board to contact legislators with regard to same.

Chair Ogren advised that this item was continued to March 18, 2025.

Sheriff - Transfer of Funds - \$100,000. Requires 4/5 Vote.

Chair Ogren advised that this item was continued to March 18, 2025.

County Administration - Presentation re the State Fire Marshal's release of Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps. Presentation and discussion only.

Deputy County Administrator Elizabeth Nielsen appeared before the Board, advising the County Fire Warden Greg Roath, Office of Emergency Services (OES) Director Bryan Schenone and Community Development Director Rick Dean were also available to answer questions or discuss the item. Ms. Nielsen presented a powerpoint presentation regarding the roll out and County responsibilities associated with Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones recently released by the State Fire Marshal. Ms. Nielsen provided an overview definition of Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for local jurisdictions (County, cities and fire districts) and summarized the County's responsibility to open a 30-day public comment period. Ms. Nielsen advised that the County was notified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal on February 10, 2025 and that the County was required to adopt an ordinance designating the areas (in unincorporated areas of the County) of moderate, high and very high fire severity within 120 days of receiving the notification.

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County Administration – (continued)

Ms. Nielsen advised that, following receipt of public comments and staff review (Community Development, OES and Sheriff Departments), the County could increase or add a Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ), but could not reduce the designated severity of a FHSZ already determined by the State Fire Marshal.

In response to Supervisor Kobseff, Ms. Nielsen advised that other jurisdictions would be required to follow a similar process and could adopt ordinances of their own.

Ms. Nielsen continued the powerpoint, and pointed out the web address for the interactive CalFire FHSZ map viewer. Ms. Nielsen advised that public comments should include specific information regarding the comment area and that the public comment period ends on April 2, 2025. Ms. Nielsen additionally advised that local fire districts would be notified of the County's ordinance adoption should those districts wish to adopt.

Discussion followed between members of the Board and Fire Warden Roath regarding the lack of consideration of fire fuels reduction efforts made in certain areas when the FHSZ maps were developed, the need for information regarding the possible impact of the County's drought proclamation on FHSZ map development criteria, the earlier process for developing State Responsibility Area (SRA) prior to development of LRA, certain non-fire suppression services provided to the County by the State Fire Marshal and the State legislation that required development of the SRA, LRA and FHSZ maps designations.

Supervisor Kobseff voiced concerns regarding the short time frame provided by the legislation for the County to adopt an ordinance and the potential for an unfunded mandate upon the County.

Supervisor Haupt voiced concerns regarding the differences in fire severity criteria used by the US Forest Service and by the State Fire Marshal.

Further discussion followed regarding the need for information concerning the timeframes associated with the FHSZ designations, concerns that the FHSZ designations do not reflect true risks to the public (with staffing of fire response personnel not taken into consideration) and additional concerns that property owner and other fuel reduction efforts were not considered.

County Counsel Natalie E. Reed advised that, under Government Code, the State Fire Marshal is required to periodically review very high severity zone designations coinciding with review of SRA lands every five years.

In response to Supervisor Haupt, Fire Warden Roath advised that SRA boundaries are reviewed annually, with minor changes made at the last review.

Supervisor Haupt voiced concerns regarding the negative impacts associated with the lack of sufficient Forest Service fire equipment and staffing to effectively respond to fires and protect rural communities.

Supervisor Kobseff reiterated his concerns regarding the short time frame for the County to comply with the legislation requirements and the potential for the FHSZ designations to adversely affect local property owners' insurance rates.

Discussion followed, including Ms. Nielsen and Ms. Reed regarding the potential for the State to proceed with adopting the designations should the County not adopt an ordinance, the legislation adopted in 2021 effective January 1, 2022, the defensible space requirements that would be in effect for very high fire severity zones, the potential negative impacts to fire reduction efforts associated with the location of endangered species designations in certain areas, the LHSZ boundaries that split properties with differing designations, the lack of street details on the interactive maps and the need to draft letters to the County's legislators, California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) representatives to voice the County's concerns regarding the FHSZ map adoption process.

In response to Supervisor Kobseff, Mr. Schenone appeared before the Board and provided an overview of the process used by Oregon in developing/modeling their fire hazard maps.

In response to Supervisor Kobseff, Mr. Dean appeared before the Board, advising that the FHSZ designations determine the need or not for home hardening efforts by property owners.

Ms. Nielsen advised that she would work to draft the requested letter to the County's legislators, CSAC and RCRC regarding this issue.

Appointments - County Clerk - Appointment of five members to the scheduled vacancies on the Local Child Care Planning Council (LPC) for two Providers, one Consumer and two Public Agency Representatives, for terms ending February 28, 2027. Daintry Zarzynski, Tiffany Elliott and Hilary Oiler appointed.

Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winingham provided an overview of the request, advising that incumbents Daintry Zarzynski, Tiffany Elliott and Hilary Oiler were interested in reappointment and that the Local Child Care Planning Council (LPC) was in support. In addition, Ms. Winingham requested that the two remaining vacancies be continued to a later date.

It was moved by Supervisor Kobseff, seconded by Supervisor Ogren and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT to appoint Daintry Zarzynski, Tiffany Elliott and Hilary Oiler to the scheduled vacancies on the Local Childcare Planning Council, for terms ending February 28, 2027.

Two remaining vacancies were continued to a later date.

Minute Approval - February 18, 2025. Approved.

It was moved by Supervisor Haupt, seconded by Supervisor Kobseff and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT to approve the February 18, 2025 minutes as presented.

Public Hearings - Community Development - Planning Division - Continued public hearing for the second reading of an Ordinance reclassifying approximately 323 acres of land south and west of Highway 3 and the community of Callahan, from Rural Residential Agricultural, 40 acre minimum (R-R-B-40) to Timberland Production District (TPZ) on APN 031-290-010; Township 39N, Range 8W, Section 7; MDB&M, for the McDonagh Timberlands Zone Change (Z-24-01) project. (Continued from February 18, 2025)

This was the time set for a continued public hearing for the second reading of an Ordinance reclassifying approximately 323 acres of land south and west of Highway 3 and the community of Callahan, from Rural Residential Agricultural, 40 acre minimum (R-R-B-40) to Timberland Production District (TPZ) on APN 031-290-010; Township 39N, Range 8W, Section 7; MDB&M, for the McDonagh Timberlands Zone Change (Z-24-01) project, having been introduced on February 18, 2025.

The Chair opened the continued public hearing.

Senior Planner James Phelps appeared before the Board and provided an overview of the request to rezone property located south and west of Highway 3 and the community of Callahan. Mr. Phelps advised that the project was consistent with the County's General Plan and exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), under the Timberland Preserves section.

In response to the Chair, Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winingham advised that the Clerk's Office had not received any correspondence related to the item.

There being no public comments received, the public hearing was declared closed.

It was moved by Supervisor Haupt, seconded by Supervisor Kobseff and carried, following a roll call vote with Supervisors Haupt, Harris, Kobseff and Ogren voting YES and Supervisor Valenzuela ABSENT to determine the project exempt from CEQA in accordance with Section 15264; and waive the second reading of the draft ordinance amending Zoning District Map 10-6.205-519; and adopt the draft Ordinance 25-01 amending Zoning District Map 10-6.205-519.

Closed Session - Conference with legal counsel, existing litigation pursuant to Government Code §54956.9(d)(1), three cases, conference with legal counsel, anticipated litigation pursuant to Government Code §54956.9, significant exposure to litigation pursuant to Government Code §54956.9(d)(2), one case, commenced at 10:59 a.m., concluded at 11:41 a.m., with no action taken.

Report On Closed Session

County Counsel Natalie E. Reed announced that closed session concluded at 11:41 a.m., with no reportable action taken.

Board and Staff Reports

Supervisor Harris advised of his attendance at a monument meeting, a Willow Creek School dinner, a forestry meeting, Superior California Economic Development District (SCEDD) meeting, a Cattlewomen's pie meeting, a Lion Pride dinner in Fort Jones, a Local Cooperative Solutions (LCS) meeting (related to reduction of water use in lieu of curtailments in the Scott and Shasta River systems), a Shasta River Water Users Association meeting and a Tulelake Fairgrounds dinner.

Supervisor Kobseff advised of his attendance at a Foresters' breakfast in Weed and First 5 Siskiyou Children and Families Commission meeting.

Supervisor Haupt reported on the Presidential Executive Order related to the Forest Service and timber management regulations.

Supervisor Ogren advised of her attendance at a Continuum of Care (COC) Advisory Board meeting, a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation event planning meeting, a Scott Watershed Information Forum, a Cradle to Careers for Siskiyou (C2C4S) Executive Board meeting, a Collier Interpretive and Information Center (CIIC) meeting, and a Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) Legislative Update via ZOOM.

Adjournment - There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, the meeting was adjourned.

Attest:
Laura Bynum, County Clerk

Nancy Ogren, Chair

By: _____
Deputy