

Siskiyou County Local Agency Formation Commission
Regular Meeting
January 14, 2025

The Siskiyou County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) meeting of January 14, 2025, was called to order by Chair Ogren at approximately 9:00 a.m. in the Siskiyou County Meeting Chambers, 311 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor, Yreka, California.

Present: Commissioners Harkness, Baker, Valenzuela, and Ogren

Absent: Commissioner Mazzoni

Also Present: Hailey Lang, Executive Officer; Rachel Jereb, Deputy Executive Officer; Rick Dean, Director, Community Development Department; Janine Rowe, Commission Clerk

Election of Officers:

Chair:

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Valenzuela, to elect Commissioner Ogren as Chair for 2025.

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present.

Vice Chair:

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Valenzuela, seconded by Commissioner Ogren, to elect Commissioner Harkness as Vice Chair for 2025.

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present.

Minutes: It was moved by Commissioner Valenzuela, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, to approve the Minutes from the October 8, 2024, LAFCo meeting as presented.

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present.

Unscheduled Appearances: Ms. Angelina Cook of McCloud, who is also an alternate public member Siskiyou LAFCo commissioner, asked the Commission to reinstate remote participation since so many communities in Siskiyou County are located some distance from Yreka. She said she believed allowing remote participation would facilitate a higher level of trust and participation in LAFCo.

Conflict of Interest Declaration: None

Presentation of Documents and Availability of Public Records: Chair Ogren read the Agenda items.

Public Hearing Protocol: Chair Ogren skipped the item because there was no public hearing in today's meeting.

Changes to the Agenda: None

New Business:

Agenda Item 1: LAFCo Policy Handbook (Discussion Item)

Staff has prepared a policy handbook, in line with many other LAFCos, in order to provide clear guidance on processes and standards to staff and to members of the public.

Staff Report:

The previously circulated Staff Report was reviewed by the Commission, and a presentation of the project was provided by Executive Officer Hailey Lang.

Ms. Lang told the Commission that staff has received applications for annexations or received notice from other agencies that they plan to submit an application for annexation or other type of LAFCo project. Therefore, in an effort to be proactive in providing guidelines for staff, the public, and other agencies, staff created a policy handbook based on the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg (CKH) Act which guides LAFCo decision-making. She said the handbook outlines the important aspects and processes for handling applications and ensuring legal compliance with the CKH Act and is designed to be streamlined, concise, and aligned with other north state LAFCos. The aim is to have clear guidelines in place to avoid confusion when processing applications.

Ms. Lang said she would bring this back to the Commission in February as a public hearing with the hope that the handbook can be adopted.

Commission Questions/Discussion:

Discussion was held that once the handbook is in place, it would not need to be updated unless there are code changes. The handbook will be valuable for the public because it allows people to review and understand it. It simplifies the process of referencing codes and regulations, which were previously confusing. The format makes it easier for everyone to understand LAFCo law and related matters, especially during annexations.

There was discussion that there have been no significant legislative changes at the state level related to LAFCo. The only notable change mentioned is the removal of the indemnification agreement requirement. Overall, the processes, standards, and policies have remained largely unchanged, and the status quo has been maintained for a long time.

Commissioner Harkness wanted to know if the Department of Defense's climate resilience district falls under LAFCo, and Ms. Lang said she would look into it.

Agenda Item 2: Presentation Regarding Tax Sharing Agreements (Discussion Item)

Staff has prepared a discussion item to provide information on the types of tax sharing agreements and provide examples of how other counties handle the tax sharing process for LAFCo projects.

Staff Report:

The previously circulated Staff Report was reviewed by the Commission, and a presentation of the project was provided by Executive Officer Hailey Lang.

Ms. Lang told the Commission that staff has been getting a lot of questions regarding annexations, so she wanted to discuss tax sharing agreements and why they're required in the LAFCo process. She said there are two main tax sharing agreements. Individual tax sharing agreements are specific to

each project. When an application is submitted, it prompts staff to initiate a tax sharing agreement between the County and the project city. The Master tax sharing agreement is overarching and includes high-level calculations in order to streamline the process and facilitate initial discussions between agencies.

Ms. Lang provided an example using Imperial County's Master Tax Sharing Study which included all of the cities. They created a master tax sharing study with the intent to streamline the process so all the calculations are done and the cities would not have to enter into individual tax sharing agreements.

Ms. Lang used Mono County as another example. She said they had an ad hoc committee geared toward individual projects which involved discussions among the town in question along with the supervisors and other groups and staff.

In conclusion, Ms. Lang told the Commission that the purpose of the staff report is to inform everyone about the need for tax sharing agreements in anticipation of more annexation applications in the near future. She said the report aims to document the types of tax sharing agreements available and to facilitate a discussion regarding whether the Commission should consider procuring a master tax sharing agreement study.

Commission Questions/Discussion:

Discussion was held that Siskiyou County has an existing tax sharing policy that was created by the County Administrator's office. Ms. Lang said it has not yet been determined how that tax sharing policy will work with other projects.

Also discussed was that tax sharing agreements can streamline projects. The property tax negotiation piece, which LAFCo staff isn't involved in, creates a shot clock with a 90-day negotiation period. LAFCo provides information to the county and the city in which the project is located to start discussions but cannot proceed until negotiations are complete. This often causes delays in projects, which is a common issue in many counties.

Discussion was held that the master study would have to be redone if significant financial changes occur, like changes to the general fund. An example is the Imperial County LAFCo study from 2022, which hasn't been updated since then. If finances remain stable, the existing study might suffice. For payment, both LAFCo and the county collaborated on funding the study and cities contributed to the LAFCo budget, which could also be used for the study. Ms. Lang said this topic could be discussed further to gauge interest from the county and cities. Ms. Lang added that she could look into the cost of getting the master study done.

Discussion was held that because LAFCo staff does not currently have a lot of projects going on right now, it would be a good time for staff to research how long it would take to prepare the study and what the cost would be.

Items for Discussion/Direction: None

Miscellaneous:

- 1. Future Meetings:** The next regular meeting of Siskiyou County LAFCo is scheduled for Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.
- 2. Correspondence:**

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- a. Letter dated December 23, 2024, to CALAFCO Board of Directors from LAFCo Executive Officers.

Ms. Lang told the Commission that there is some drama at CALAFCO regarding concerns about transparency and the removal of key committees. Major LAFCos like Orange County, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Ventura are not renewing their memberships in the coming fiscal year which may lead to increased costs for smaller LAFCos. Staff is monitoring the situation for potential impacts and future discussions.

Discussion was held regarding the benefits of belonging to CALAFCO, which are being able to collaborate with other LAFCos and being able to access a lot of useful information on the CALAFCO website. Commissioner Valenzuela said it would make sense to belong to CALAFCO because they deal with lobbying and thought it would be a good idea to wait and see what transpires.

- 3. Staff Comments:** Discussion was held about the lack of microphones and other amenities no longer available in the newly named Meeting Chambers, formerly known as Board of Supervisors Chambers.
- 4. Commission Comments: None**

Adjournment: The meeting was concluded at approximately 9:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hailey Lang, Secretary

vjr