

EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

May 6, 2020

STATE OF NEVADA)
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COUNTY OF EUREKA)

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Eureka County Commissioners met pursuant to law on May 6, 2020. The meeting was conducted telephonically pursuant to Governor Sisolak’s Declaration of Emergency Directive 006, which was extended through May 15th by Emergency Directive 016. Present were Chairman J.J. Goicoechea; Vice Chairman Michael Sharkozy (via interactive video); Commissioner Rich McKay; District Attorney Ted Beutel (via telephone); and Deputy Commissioner Clerk Jackie Berg. County staff and members of the public were able to attend the meeting via a toll-free conference call number. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve the agenda as posted; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Goicoechea opened the floor for public comments, providing instructions for those participating by phone on how to provide comment and noting that there would be a public comment opportunity at the end of the meeting as well.

Assessor Michael Mears informed that the Department of Motor Vehicles remains closed with no estimated reopen date from the State at this time.

Diamond Valley resident Mark Moyle, commented on behalf of the Diamond Natural Resources Protection & Conservation Association and Mark Moyle Farms. He stated the DNRPCA met on May 5th and decided to appeal the recent ruling by Judge Gary Fairman in Seventh Judicial District Court, in which the Judge determined that the Diamond Valley Groundwater Management Plan is contrary to Nevada water law. Mr. Moyle added that DNRPCA encourages Eureka County to appeal this decision as well.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 14, 2020: Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve minutes of the April 14, 2020, Commission meeting; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

April 29, 2020: Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve minutes of the April 29, 2020, Commission meeting; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

COMPTROLLER

Payment of Expenditures: Expenditures were presented for approval by Comptroller Kim Todd. Two invoices exceeded the six-month limit and required special approval by the Board.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve payment of \$60.00 to White Pine Juvenile Probation for a shared annual software licensing agreement through November 15, 2020; Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve a quarterly payment of \$6,227.75 to White Pine County for Eureka County’s share of District Court expenses from July 1, 2019, through September 30, 2019; Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve expenditures in the amount of \$763,880.81 for accounts payable; \$636,834.29 for payroll and benefit related expenses (including employee paid deductions); \$32,447.04 for a pass-through tax allocation to the School District; \$2,298.67 for a pass-through to the State Controller; \$249.82 for a pass-through to the Department of Taxation;

\$93.00 for a pass-through to the Washoe County Crime Lab; and \$6,172.12 in Yucca Mountain expenditures for a grand total of \$1,441,975.75. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. *Note: Amounts for the two late invoices are included in these totals.*

Fund Balance Report: The Board reviewed a report on all current fund balances.

Adjustment of Four Salary Ranges: In January, the Comptroller worked with the Board to revamp the Eureka County Wage & Salary Scales (regular and law enforcement). Ms. Todd explained that four positions were inadvertently missed and she asked that the Board take action to align these positions on the updated Wage & Salary Scales.

Commissioner McKay motioned to adjust the following positions consistent with earlier actions of the Board, effective July 12, 2020: Chief Juvenile Probation Officer/Range 128 and Juvenile Probation Officer/Range 125 on the Law Enforcement Wage & Salary Scale; Natural Resources Department Assistant/Range 111 and Senior Center Cook/Range 111 on the regular Wage & Salary Scale. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Updated Job Descriptions: Ms. Todd explained that staff worked with Nevada POOL/PACT to update certain job descriptions to more accurately reflect actual duties performed and to align with the updated Wage & Salary Scale.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve Juvenile Probation Administrative Assistant I & II job descriptions and corresponding Ranges 117 & 122 on the Eureka County Wage & Salary Scale, effective July 1, 2020. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve Deputy Treasurer/Public Administrator/ Public Guardian I, II, & III job descriptions and corresponding Ranges 117, 122, & 125 on the Eureka County Wage & Salary Scale, effective July 1, 2020. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Merit Steps: During an extensive update of the County's Personnel Policy Manual in 2009 and 2010, the Wage & Salary Committee worked diligently to make recommendations to the Commissioners and Human Resources Analyst, who was tasked with overseeing the rewrite.

The recommendation to revamp the range and step system was partially done – the number of steps an employee could advance annually was reduced to one (prior to that an employee could advance up to two steps). However, the second phase of the recommendation, to implement more equitable and progressive increments between steps, was never done.

After receiving multiple questions and comments from employees as to why this final adjustment was never done, Ms. Todd prepared a proposal to correct merit increase increments in accordance with the recommendation from the Wage & Salary Committee. She proposed that Ranges 100 through 110 change to a \$0.25 increment between steps; Ranges 111 through 135 change to a \$0.40 increment between steps; and law enforcement change to a \$.040 increment between steps. Fiscal impact is minimal, and Ms. Todd estimated that under these new calculations the highest salary increase would be approximately \$146.00 annually.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to adjust merit increase increments on the Wage & Salary Scale for regular and law enforcement employees, as presented by the Comptroller, effective July 12, 2020. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Deletion of Salary Range: During update of the Wage & Salary Scale in January, several ranges were eliminated because they were no longer tied to a job description. Ms. Todd recommended eliminating Range 114 as well, as it will no longer be tied to a job description in the upcoming fiscal year.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to eliminate Range 114 on the Wage & Salary Scale effective July 12, 2020; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Match on HSA Plans: Ms. Todd explained that, each year, the Commissioners determine whether to continue budgeting the \$500.00 match for employees on the high-deductible HSA health insurance plan, which offers savings to both the County and the employees.

Commissioner McKay motioned to continue the County match of up to \$500.00 on the high-deductible Health Savings Account plans for Fiscal Year 2020-2021; Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Set Public Hearing for Budget & Tax Rates: Commissioner McKay motioned to ratify scheduling a public hearing at 11:00 a.m. on May 20, 2020, for the Board to adopt tax rates and consider changes to the Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

FHN FINANCIAL MAIN STREET ADVISORS

Update on Eureka County Investment Portfolio & Economic Trends: Gregory Balls, Portfolio Manager & Financial Analyst, and Rick Phillips, President & Chief Investment Officer, joined the meeting by phone to give an update on Eureka County's investment portfolio and the current economic trends.

There has been a tremendous amount of movement in the stock market as a result of COVID-19. GDP growth (gross domestic product) was at 4.8% in the first quarter of Calendar Year 2020 before the full effects were realized. Predictions that GDP growth could drop to an unprecedented low of -65% in the second quarter are challenged by a huge difference of opinion in the industry. FHN feels the second quarter number will be somewhere between -26.5% and -40%, with some level of recovery in the third and fourth quarters.

Mr. Balls relayed that the government shutdown is having a devastating effect on all areas of the economy, including US unemployment rates, which have risen to astronomical levels. He noted that job gains over the past two decades eroded in a matter of five weeks. Consumer spending has weakened across the board, and substantial drops in inflation are expected over the next two years. The five-year inflation forecast anticipates some gain, but not a full pre-COVID recovery.

Despite lower yields and negative effects on the stock market, Mr. Balls feels that Eureka County's portfolio is positioned very well due to diversity of investments and maturity distribution. Managing maturity levels can help the County manage losses during a slow economy. Treasurer Pernecia Johnson has consulted with FHN about the County's potential need for more liquidity due to reduced revenue projections, and this could have a slight effect on interest earnings but, overall, Mr. Balls feels the County is positioned far better than most entities and he believes it will continue to realize some nice investment income over the next couple of years.

COMMISSIONERS

Response to Nevada Department of Indigent Defense Services: District Attorney Beutel explained that the newly formed Nevada Department of Indigent Defense Services has requested information related to the upcoming fiscal year. The Department is particularly interested in rural counties and what financial provisions have been made to cover indigent defense services. A letter, financial status report, and copy of the upcoming contract with Kelly C. Brown, PLLC, were prepared in response to the request. Mr. Beutel reported that a total of \$155,000.00 is budgeted for indigent defense (\$60,000.00 for the base contract and an additional \$95,000.00 for extra provisions provided by law, including court appointed and conflict counsel).

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to send the letter, financial, contract information for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 to the Nevada Department of Indigent Defense Services; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Public Works Director Candidate: On March 6th, the Board appointed an Interview Panel consisting of Chairman Goicoechea, Ron Damele, and Kim Todd. On April 9th, the Panel interviewed candidates for the position of Public Works Director. Selection of a new Director will allow time for training and shadowing before retirement of the current Director, Mr. Damele.

Ms. Todd announced that the Interview Panel recommended Jeb Rowley who was the top-ranked candidate. Mr. Rowley currently works for the County in the supervisory position of Senior Mechanic. Chairman Goicoechea commented that the Panel conducted lengthy and thorough interviews and he thanked the candidates who applied for the position.

The Board asked the Interview Panel to negotiate a salary package with Mr. Rowley for the Board's consideration at the next meeting. Ms. Todd recused herself from the process, so Chairman Goicoechea and Mr. Damele agreed to proceed with negotiations.

Rehab Services of Nevada: The physical therapy contract for the upcoming fiscal year was presented to the Board for approval. The contract pays mileage reimbursement and pays an hourly professional rate for travel time from and to Elko for up to two days per week. A subsidy of \$80.00 is paid for any number of patients below the target number of eight patients for the first clinic day in any given week; no patient subsidy is paid for the optional second day per week. The new contract clarifies that all patients seen will count towards the eight-patient target, including those seen outside of the clinic (i.e. at home or at school).

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve the physical therapy contract with Rehab Services of Nevada for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 at a not to exceed amount of \$80,074.80. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Diamond Valley Adjudication: On January 31, 2020, the Nevada State Engineer issued the final Order of Determination of the Relative Rights in and to All Waters of the Diamond Valley Hydrographic Basin and the Order was filed in Seventh Judicial District Court on February 12, 2020. On April 6, 2020, the District Court issued its Order in relation to the Diamond Valley Adjudication and is now accepting Notices of Exception.

Commissioner McKay motioned to ratify Eureka County's Notice of Intent to file a Notice of Exception in accordance with the Seventh Judicial District Court Order in response to the State Engineer's Order of Determination in the Diamond Valley Adjudication. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to grant authority to County staff including the Natural Resources Manager Jake Tibbitts, District Attorney Ted Beutel, Chairman Goicoechea, Consulting Hydrogeologist Dale Bugenig, and outside legal counsel to continue with the Notice of Exception, any verbal or written presentations or filings, and any other work related to the Seventh Judicial District Court Order (Case No. CV-2002009) in response to the State Engineer's Order of Determination in the Diamond Valley Adjudication. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Sagebrush Ecosystem Program: Chairman Goicoechea informed that the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council is working to schedule a meeting in mid-June.

COVID-19 UPDATES

COVID-19 Testing: The Eureka County Board of Health met prior to the Commission meeting to discuss updates on COVID-19. The BOH agreed to continue with the Community Testing Plan as established – testing those who are symptomatic or those with known exposure. Eureka County still has zero confirmed cases of Coronavirus.

Phased Reopening: Governor Sisolak recently announced a phased economic reopening plan for the State and more specific guidance is expected within the next day or two.

LEAP: Chairman Goicoechea was appointed to the Local Empowerment Advisory Panel (LEAP), which has been tasked with advising the Governor's office and counties as the State plans and works to reopen in a manner that safeguards both the citizens and the economy. In the meantime, Chairman Goicoechea encouraged everyone to continue observing all health and safety guidelines.

PRAY & COMPANY

Human Resources Assessment: HR Services Manager Tori Martinez, Principal Dana Pray, and Principal Rhonda Zuraff (via phone) were in attendance to report on results of a Human Resources Assessment and potential services for Eureka County. Approximately 89 employees were invited to participate in an online survey and 28 were invited to participate in a phone survey. A total of 35 employees responded to the online survey and 22 employees responded to the phone survey.

The survey revealed several common and recurring themes. Overall, employees are very satisfied with their jobs and are not looking to work elsewhere. Relationship with immediate supervisor ranked as the most important factor to employees, followed by trust in leadership. Employees requested improved communication, fair and consistent treatment, improved accountability, improved confidentiality, and more training opportunities for both employees and supervisors. There were comments concerning hiring decisions and the need for supervisors to be trained in hiring practices and in leadership development. Employees commented that there are concerns with some specific departments; however, overall the County is ethical and has good business practices.

Input from supervisors noted a disconnect between departments, relayed a broader need for Human Resources support, and felt department heads should be evaluated and held accountable.

Ms. Martinez commended the Comptroller's office, stating that personnel files are being managed according to industry standards, although some older documentation, such as I-9 forms, are missing. The Personnel Policy is very thorough and was last updated in 2019.

Recommendations: Pray & Company recommended the following HR related projects for Eureka County: update I-9 records; implement recruitment standards and training; regularly monitor and update personnel policies; provide supervisor/manager training; and provide executive coaching for elected and appointed officials. Related to HR support, Pray & Company felt Eureka County should have an HR professional on-site an average of three days per week to deal with HR issues as needed and to develop performance management and communication strategies.

Pray & Company invited the Board to contact them with any questions or comments and will prepare a Human Resources proposal for consideration at a future meeting.

IT / NETWORK

IT Update: IT Director Misty Rowley reported that the new spam server has been installed. Data migration to the new GIS server is complete. The NOC (Network Operations Center) room cleanup at the Sheriff's Office is complete. She has been working on the interface between the State and the Sheriff's Office CAD system and it is currently being tested. Firmware and operating systems for the telephone servers are being updated. Syber Networks was in Eureka on May 3rd to assist with setting up the rack and server for the Secretary of State. Planning continues for NOC room cleanup in Crescent Valley and upcoming fiber projects.

IT Support: Commissioner McKay motioned to extend the agreement between Eureka County, Business Continuity Technologies, and Syber Networks LLC for IT services and support in Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Internet Services Contract: Commissioner McKay motioned to renew the contract with EM3 Networks for provision of internet services for the period of June 1, 2020, through May 31, 2021. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

SENIOR CENTERS

Update Report: Senior Centers Program Director, Millie Oram, reported on activities at the Eureka Senior Center and Fannie Komp Senior Center. Ms. Oram described the methods for home delivery of meals during the COVID-19 shutdown. In March, Eureka served 795 meals and Crescent Valley served 707 meals. In April, Eureka served 957 meals and Crescent Valley served 814 meals. Total deposits were \$2,545.50 for March and \$13,757.00 in April.

Ms. Oram thanked the area mines for the generous donations during these trying times. Kinross Bald Mountain donated \$6,000.00, Pan Mine donated \$2,400.00, and Nevada Gold Mines has committed to \$5,000.00. Ms. Oram also thanked the Road Department for loan of a vehicle, stating it has helped a lot.

Desk Audit Reports: Grants received from Nevada Aging & Disability Services Division are audited annually. The Board reviewed Desk Audit Reports for the following nutrition grants for the period of October 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019: 07-000-04-24-19, 07-000-07-1X-19, and 07-

000-57-NX-19; and the following transportation grant for the period of July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019: 07-000-10-BC-19. The audit reported that all monies were expended in accordance with grant guidelines.

Hiring Freeze Waiver – Casual Worker III: Ms. Oram had postponed filling a vacancy, but the Comptroller’s office notified her that other casual positions are close to exceeding allowable hours.

Commissioner McKay motioned to waive the hiring freeze and authorize the Program Director to fill the position of Casual Worker III at the Fannie Komp Senior Center. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

TREASURER

Treasurer’s Report: The Treasurer’s Reports for February and March 2020 were presented by Treasurer Pernecia Johnson, showing an ending General Fund balance of \$31,435,098.75 in February and an ending General Fund balance of \$31,486,046.90 in March. Ms. Johnson reported that interest earnings were \$107,000.00 in February, \$93,000.00 in March, and \$114,000 in April.

Delinquent Tax Notices: Ms. Johnson provided the Affidavit of Mailing of delinquent tax notices for real property parcels. A total of 269 first-year, 73 second-year, and 29 third-year delinquent tax notices were mailed.

Update on Delinquent Tax Auction: Due to the shutdown, Ms. Johnson has decided to do a “sealed-bid” mail auction in August. There are only about 15 parcels eligible for sale and minimum-bid value is less than \$6,000.00. Since the sale date has been postponed, final notices will be resent to all owners of record.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Report on Activities: Raymond Hodson, Assistant Public Works Director, reported on Road Department activities over the past couple of months. Crews returned to regular schedules on April 20th following the County’s partial shutdown that began March 27th. Crews finished work on Horse Canyon Road and Dugout Road, including installation of 11 culverts (with pipe donated by Nevada Gold Mines). A cattle guard was installed on 3 Bars Road.

Other work included blading Santa Fe Road, Ferguson Road, Tonkin Summit, McCluskey Road, Union Pass, Tonkin Willows Cutoff Road, Mustang Road, Foothill Road, Cortez Road, Dean Dann Road, and Spa Road. A blade has moved back to the JD Ranch Road and is being assisted by two water trucks provided by Nevada Gold Mines.

The screening plant was returned to the Cottonwood Pit in Crescent Valley and blades will be moving into the area for a gravel hauling project on some of those northern roads.

Sheriff Watts commended the crews for their quick assistance on the wildland fire May 5th.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Update: Public Works Director, Ron Damele, reported on Public Works projects and activities.

Utilities: All utility systems are in good working order. The Arsenic Treatment Plant in Crescent Valley is scheduled for a media change in July at a cost of \$56,950.00. The Bureau of Safe Drinking Water approved the permit for the Devil’s Gate mainline extension and the permit from Nevada Department of Transportation is expected within the week, with construction scheduled to begin on May 19th. A baseline reading on water meters will be done the end of May.

Facilities: Building maintenance and utility crews are working on the concession stand awning at the Fairgrounds. Crews are repairing sprinkler systems at the public parks in Eureka and Crescent Valley.

Free Dump Days: Free Dump Days were delayed and will be offered every Saturday in June (6th, 13th, 20th, 27th) at the Eureka Landfill and the Crescent Valley Laydown Yard.

The following items will be accepted: yard waste, furniture, white goods, tires, construction debris, and car bodies. Excluded items are hazardous materials, household garbage, and dead animals. All items must be separated and disposed of according to each waste classification.

Kobeh Valley Test Well: Quotes for the Kobeh Valley Test Well were requested from Parsons Drilling, Boart Longyear Drilling, and Stonehouse Drilling. Two responses were received and Parsons Drilling had the low quote of \$32,110.00. They will begin on May 18th and work should be completed in three days.

Fire Departments: Mr. Damele reported there was a 20-acre fire in Henderson on May 5th and volunteers and road crews had it under control in about five hours. All fire trucks have been test driven and test pumped over the past two weeks. A pre-season fire meeting is scheduled with the BLM on May 8th. Red Card wildland firefighter refresher training is scheduled at the Eureka Fairgrounds on May 21st and at the Crescent Valley Community Center on May 22nd.

Road Maintenance MOU: The Memorandum of Understanding with McEwen Mining for road maintenance has been renewed for another year.

Planning Commission: The Planning Commission will meet on May 15th to review two pending parcel maps.

Residential Water Service: Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve the application for a 1½-inch commercial water service in Crescent Valley for APN 002-054-02, Lots 11 & 12. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Residential Sewer Service: Commissioner McKay motioned to approve the application for a residential sewer service in the Town of Eureka for APN 001-095-02. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Eureka Canyon Subdivision: Mr. Damele explained that purchasing transformers for the Eureka Canyon Subdivision will allow the cost to be prorated across the lots, rather than a single lot owner paying full price for installation of a transformer that will subsequently benefit future lot owners.

Commissioner McKay motioned to transfer \$38,160.00 from contingency (010-090-57001-000) to the Eureka Canyon Subdivision account (010-089-55010-000) for the purchase of 14 transformers for the subdivision lots. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve adjusting lot prices at the Eureka Canyon Subdivision by adding \$657.93 to each lot to allocate costs for Mt. Wheeler Power to install 14 transformers at the subdivision. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Radio Repeater Upgrades: A proposal was received from Western States Enterprise to upgrade and reconfigure County mountaintop repeaters/extenders, mobile radios, handheld radios, consoles, and backup systems. Mr. Damele explained that this will upgrade the Sheriff's Office (law enforcement departments) and EMS to a digital system. The Sheriff's Office administration will remain on an analog system, as will the Fire Departments and Public Works.

Mr. Damele explained that Western States Enterprise is a sole-source provider due to working knowledge of the County's radio system. Parts and equipment will be purchased thru NASPO purchasing alliance. Depending upon equipment and availability, this project may span two fiscal years (FY19-20 & FY20-21).

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve a proposal from Western States Enterprise in the amount of \$98,499.54 to upgrade and reconfigure the County's mountaintop repeaters and radio system, to be paid with monies budgeted for radio repeater upgrades (042-140-55010-094) in the Capital Projects Fund. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Eureka Sewer Pond Upgrades: Lumos & Associates submitted a proposal for engineering, design work, and related professional services to remediate and reline the primary sewer treatment pond for the Town of Eureka and to prepare a design plan for lining the secondary pond at some point in the future. Mr. Damele explained that Lumos has started the process of prequalifying contractors for this project because of the specialized nature of the work.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve the engineering proposal from Lumos & Associates related to sewer pond remediation, in an amount not to exceed \$173,000.00, utilizing funds budgeted for contract services (010-042-53010-058) in the Public Works budget. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE

Sportsman Appointment: A letter was received from Arnold Pena noting his interest in serving on the County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife. Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to appoint Arnold Pena to the County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife, representing sportsmen, for the remainder of a three-year term through December 31, 2020. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Report on Activities: Natural Resources Manager, Jake Tibbitts, reported on recent activities, meetings, and upcoming events.

BLM Processes: Mr. Tibbitts stated he has been busy reviewing and preparing comments on numerous BLM projects including EISs for the permitting/NEPA process on various mines in the area and the EA for Targeted & Prescriptive Grazing of Annual Grasses in Great Basin Ecosystems in Nevada.

Nevada Gold Mines: Nevada Gold Mines is applying a new strategy in regards to its land management and conservation programs, and in this regard is seeking letters of interest or proposals from parties to assist in meeting its conservation obligations.

Upcoming Meetings: Due to the COVID-19 shutdown, most meetings have been cancelled. The Conservation District will meet, via telephonic and electronic means, on May 11th to address deadlines related to budgets and other matters.

Sage Grouse: Commissioner McKay motioned to ratify the comment letter sent on April 6, 2020, to the BLM Nevada State Office regarding the Nevada & Northeastern California Draft Supplemental EIS for the Greater Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan Amendment. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Proposed Pinyon & Juniper Management Categorical Exclusion: Mr. Tibbitts explained that the US Department of the Interior, BLM, is developing a categorical exclusion, which will allow projects related to pinyon and juniper management (to improve wildlife habitats and reduce fuels) to move forward more efficiently.

Commissioner McKay motioned to ratify the comment letter sent to the US Department of the Interior, BLM, on April 13, 2020, regarding the BLM's Proposed Pinyon & Juniper Management Categorical Exclusion. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Nevada Wildfire Awareness Month: Mr. Tibbitts presented a resolution in support of May as Nevada Wildfire Awareness Month. This year's theme is "*Wildfire Knows No Boundaries. Make Yours!?*" The Firewise Community Days typically coincide with Wildfire Awareness Month, but are postponed this year due to COVID-19.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to adopt a resolution promoting May 2020 as Nevada Wildfire Awareness Month; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION BEFORE THE EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
IN SUPPORT OF NEVADA WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH – MAY 2020
“WILDFIRE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES. MAKE YOURS!”

Whereas, wildfire significantly impacts Nevada's environmental, economic and social well-being; and

Whereas, residents of Nevada's fire-prone communities need to accept responsibility for living in high fire-hazard areas; and

Whereas, residents must prepare to survive wildfire by ensuring proper management of vegetation surrounding the home and appropriate home construction and maintenance to resist ignition; and

Whereas, wildfires can occur during any month;

Whereas, residents must stay continuously vigilant and prepared for wildfire throughout the year; and

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Eureka County Board of Commissioners supports the month of May 2020, as Nevada Wildfire Awareness Month and this year's theme "**Wildfire Knows No Boundaries. Make Yours!?**" as a means for education and a call for residents of Eureka County to take action to reduce the wildfire threat and prepare their homes, families, and community for wildfire, and stay prepared throughout the year.

Passed, Approved and Adopted this 6th day of May, 2020.
EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: J.J. Goicoechea, DVM
J.J. Goicoechea, Chairman

Attest: Jackie Berg
Jackie Berg, Commissioner Clerk

Nevada Vanadium Gibellini Project: Commissioner McKay motioned to ratify a letter to the BLM accepting Cooperating Agency status on the EIS process for the Nevada Vanadium Gibellini Project. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Ramboll US Corporation: A proposal was received for assistance in reviewing and evaluating the air quality analysis for the Gold Rush Project. Mr. Tibbitts clarified that the BLM has not begun the Cooperating Agency process for this project yet, but Nevada Gold Mines is coordinating with the County and has made the baseline reports available. Mr. Tibbitts and Consulting Hydrogeologist Dale Bugenig have the expertise to review water and natural resource issues, but need assistance with the air quality review.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve contracting with Ramboll US Corporation for assistance with review of air quality analysis for the Nevada Gold Mines Goldrush Project, for an amount not to exceed \$12,000.00 to be paid from the Natural Resources Multiple Use Protection Fund. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Goldrush Project: Mr. Tibbitts and Mr. Bugenig reviewed the mine's water model for the Goldrush Project. The water model was actually developed as part of the Deep South Expansion Project and, as a Cooperating Agency, the County previously submitted comments on that EIS.

Nevada Gold Mines has addressed many of Mr. Bugenig's comments on the water model for the Goldrush Project. Mr. Tibbitts again clarified that the BLM has not begun the Cooperating Agency process for this project and the process thus far has been in cooperation with the mine.

Mr. Tibbitts proposed sending a letter to the BLM stating appreciation for Nevada Gold Mines' close coordination with the County and informing the BLM that the County feels its comments and concerns on the water model have been adequately addressed.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve sending a letter to the BLM regarding Nevada Gold Mines Goldrush Project and authorized the Chairman to sign the letter outside of the meeting. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Weed Control District: Mr. Tibbitts sought direction concerning this season's weed spraying. The contract weed sprayer, scheduled to begin in late April, is short-staffed this year and availability of a contract sprayer is not expected any time soon.

In light of the Board's direction to curtail spending due to forecasted revenue shortfalls, Mr. Tibbitts proposed the following: (a) distribute herbicide to members of the Diamond Valley Weed Control District; (b) allocate herbicide commensurate with the amount of the special tax assessment tied to their property; and (c) require that the herbicide be used for noxious weeds only. In the meantime, Mr. Tibbitts will continue working with Nevada Gold Mines on a potential cooperative proposal between the mine, Eureka County, and the Eureka Conservation District for weed management. The Board concurred that Mr. Tibbitts should proceed as described.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received from: Arnold Pena; Eureka County High School; Eureka County Juvenile Probation; Nevada Gold Mines; Mt. Wheeler Power; Western States Enterprise; Central Nevada Regional Water Authority; Humboldt River Basin Water Authority; Lumos & Assoc; Nevada Assoc. of Counties; Nevada Department of Indigent Defense; Nevada Aging & Disability Services Div. (3); Nevada Div. of Water Resources; Ramboll US Corporation; and numerous COVID-19 updates from Federal, State, and regional agencies.

RECESS FOR LUNCH

The Board recessed for lunch from 12:33 to 1:30 p.m.

FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Investment Revenue: Treasurer Pernecia Johnson gave a brief overview on investments and interest earnings. As of March 31st, the County's investment portfolio had a book value of \$73 million and a market value of \$75 million, for a gain of \$2 million. As of March 31st, approximately \$886,000.00 has been earned in interest in the current fiscal year.

For budgeting purposes, Ms. Johnson originally estimated \$1 million in interest earnings for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, but suggested reducing that by \$100,000.00. Kim Todd confirmed that she had decreased the budgeted amount to \$906,550.00. The Commissioners agreed with the more conservative number.

Revenue Projections: Ms. Todd and the Chairman recently participated in a conference call between the Nevada Department of Taxation, NACO, and other counties, to discuss the expected loss in revenues due to COVID-19. After the call, Ms. Todd reduced budgeted revenues where she could (such as consolidated tax and room tax), but explained that the Department of Taxation will not allow a reduction to the budgeted amounts for real property taxes, personal property taxes, and net proceeds of minerals tax. Ms. Todd recommended reducing the amount budgeted for State grants received by the Senior Centers by 50% and the Board concurred.

Personnel: The Board made no changes to the amount budgeted for personnel, but cautioned that future hiring requests will be given serious consideration.

Capital Outlay: The Commissioners discussed the budgeted capital improvement projects with staff, particularly Ron Damele. Everyone agreed that it is no longer feasible to do the multi-year County-wide road and utility project (budgeted at \$12.5 million the first year), but felt a County-wide pavement maintenance project could be done (no new pavement) with a budgeted amount of \$3.5 to \$4 million. The Airport project will be placed on hold, but \$475,000.00 will remain in the budget, and some Airport work can be done under the pavement maintenance project.

Capital outlay for equipment in the Road Department budget was reduced from \$800,000.00 to \$700,000.00. Capital outlay of \$350,000.00 will remain in the Landfill budget. Mr. Damele explained that about \$200,000.00 worth of equipment (budgeted in the current fiscal year) will not be delivered before June 30th, so that amount needs to rollover into the upcoming year's budget. Capital outlay in the Sheriff's budget was reduced from \$65,000.00 to \$40,000.00. Capital outlay in the Public Works budget was reduced from \$100,000.00 to \$60,000.00. Installation of transformers at the Eureka Canyon Subdivision will be done in the current fiscal year, so \$100,000.00 budgeted for capital outlay was removed from the upcoming year's budget.

Monies budgeted in different funds to contribute to the multi-year County-wide road and utility project were removed, as follows: \$500,000.00 from Eureka Water Department, \$25,000.00 from Eureka Sewer Department, \$200,000.00 from Crescent Valley Water Utility Fund, and \$100,000.00 from Devil's Gate Water District.

The District Court budget contained \$50,000.00 for capital outlay per a request from the District Court Judges to upgrade the audio/video recording system (JAVS). Clerk Recorder Lisa Hoehne stated the District Court budget was supposed to have an additional \$10,000.00 for a copy

machine. The Board asked her to forego this purchase, noting that the Recorder's budget had \$10,000.00 for a new copy machine as well.

Capital Projects Fund: The Capital Projects Fund had an overall decrease. Monies to purchase a service truck for the Eureka Landfill were removed since the purchase was made in the current fiscal year. Capital outlay in this fund was decreased by \$50,000.00, but \$25,000.00 was added for County-wide contingency (for a net decrease of \$25,000.00) in case a department has an emergency it cannot cover due to the extensive across-the-board capital outlay reductions. The Commissioners decided to postpone a remodel of the dispatch area and related work at the Sheriff's Office, reducing the budget an additional \$100,000.00.

The Commissioners considered monies budgeted for fiber and network upgrades. The County planned to work with the School District and Elko-Lander-Eureka County Library System to utilize the E-Rate Program to extend fiber to Crescent Valley at a considerably discounted cost of \$125,000.00. The Library System has since opted out, thus increasing costs to the County and School District, but the savings are still significant, so the Board agreed to increase the budgeted amount to \$175,000.00. The Board also agreed to leave \$160,000.00 in the budget to complete the County's fiber ring.

Departmental Budgets: Rather than trimming departmental budgets further, Chairman Goicoechea asked that the departments be cognizant of the revenue constraints the County is facing and asked that everyone be diligent in restricting spending. He reminded everyone that all capital purchases must come before the Board for approval (budget authority does not mean purchasing authority).

The only change to departmental budgets was addition of \$25,000.00 to the Commissioners' budget to support Human Resources. Monies were already earmarked in the Commissioners' and Comptroller's budgets for Human Resources, but exact costs were not yet known.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Goicoechea called for public comments; there were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner McKay motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion; the meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Approved by vote of the Board this 5th day of June, 2020.

/s/ J.J. Goicoechea

J.J. Goicoechea, Chairman

I, Jackie Berg, Deputy Commissioner Clerk, attest that these are a true, correct, and duly approved minutes of the May 6, 2020, meeting of the Board of Eureka County Commissioners.

/s/ Jackie Berg

Jackie Berg, Deputy Commissioner Clerk

I, Lisa Hoehne, Clerk Recorder of Eureka County, acknowledge and accept the attached minutes as approved by the Board of Eureka County Commissioners and attested to by the Deputy Commissioner Clerk.

/s/ Lisa Hoehne

Lisa Hoehne, Clerk Recorder