

EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

June 7, 2021

STATE OF NEVADA)
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COUNTY OF EUREKA)

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Eureka County Commissioners met pursuant to law on June 7, 2021. Present were Chairman J.J. Goicoechea; Vice Chairman Mike Sharkozy; Commissioner Rich McKay; and Administrative Assistant Jackie Berg. District Attorney Ted Beutel was traveling out of State. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Due to telephone and technical difficulties at the Crescent Valley site, it could not be connected to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Goicoechea moved the Genesis Home Health Services agenda item to after 11:00 a.m. to accommodate a scheduling conflict and removed Sheriff’s Item #2 from the agenda. Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve the agenda with those changes; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Goicoechea opened the floor for public comments.

John Brown, Eureka resident, stated there has been a lot of talk in the community about Eureka County running the local medical clinic “in-house” rather than using a contracted outside entity. Mr. Brown serves on the Medical Clinics Advisory Committee, which will meet on June 15th to discuss renewal of the contract.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 6, 2021: Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve minutes of the May 6, 2021, meeting; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

COMPTRROLLER

Payment of Expenditures: Expenditures were presented for approval by Administrative Assistant Jessica Santoyo. She explained there were two invoices that exceeded the six-month time limit. The County has paid several late invoices from this company, so Public Works notified them that invoices over six months will no longer be accepted.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to pay Wolf HVAC Invoice No. 6837 in the amount of \$3,329.00 for services in August 2020, and Invoice No. 6943 in the amount of \$8,500.00 for services in September 2020. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve expenditures in the amount of \$295,056.65 for accounts payable, \$531,920.99 for payroll and benefit related expenses (including employee paid deductions), and the following pass-through tax allocations: \$8,392,813.00 to the School District, \$7,813.42 to the Nevada State Controller, \$2,150.00 to Nevada Division of Minerals, \$494.11 to Nevada Department of Taxation, and \$120.00 to the Washoe County Crime Lab, for a grand total of \$9,230,368.17. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Fund Balance Report: The Board reviewed the report showing current fund balances.

COMMISSIONERS

Letter Supporting NNRDA: Commissioner McKay represents Eureka County on the Executive Committee for Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority, and recently

sent a letter supporting NNRDA's proposal for economic development services submitted to the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to ratify the letter to the Governor's Office of Economic Development in support of a proposal by Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority. Chairman Goicoechea seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Letter to McConnell Law Office: Correspondence received at the last meeting included a letter from McConnell Law Office requesting that Eureka NewGen Farms be placed on an agenda to discuss its challenge of Title 6 of Eureka County Code, which prohibits commercial marijuana establishments. Eureka NewGen Farms has addressed the Board on four separate occasions in public meetings, and was told that the ordinance aligns with federal law and the Board will not consider a change until federal law changes.

Chairman Goicoechea responded in writing to reiterate what Eureka NewGen Farms was verbally told. Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to ratify Chairman Goicoechea's letter to McConnell Law Office regarding Eureka NewGen Farms. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

FBO Contract Extension: Based on a recommendation from POOL/PACT Human Resources following an audit that included review of contracts with independent contractors, the County is working on recommended changes to the FBO (Fixed Base Operator) contract, and will advertise a notice requesting Statements of Qualifications.

The 90-day extension of the existing FBO (Fixed Base Operator) contract with John Walzl will expire on June 21st. Jeb Rowley indicated another extension will be needed through the summer as Public Works continues researching and developing new requirements and determines a timeline for advertising the Request for Statement of Qualifications. He said he will determine the most workable date before the existing extension expires.

Chairman Goicoechea agreed the Board would address extension of the FBO contract at the next meeting, and stated the County fully expects and encourages Mr. Walzl to submit a Statement of Qualifications for the new contract needed to comply with the POOL/PACT audit.

Legislative Updates: The Nevada Legislative Session adjourned on June 1st, and Jake Tibbitts forwarded the Board an updated copy of his worksheet on tracked Natural Resources legislation.

Chairman Goicoechea relayed that AB495, a major rewrite of mining industry taxes, gained a lot of momentum on the final night of the Legislature. He and Assessor Michael Mears worked diligently with NACO on this, and he thanked Mr. Mears for his hard work and perseverance. Some of the late-hour amendments provided assurances to the rural counties that changes to the net proceeds of minerals tax formula will not touch the local counties' portion, only the State's portion, allowing the County to be neutral on this bill rather than opposed.

For the record, Chairman Goicoechea commented that Senator Pete Goicoechea voted 'no' on AB495, which surprised a lot of people; but the Senator did not feel it was appropriate to essentially hold a gun to the head of the mining industry at the 11th hour to push this legislation through. Assemblyman John Ellison from Elko County also voted 'no' for the same reason.

Sheriff Watts said SB6, which will impact the 'red flag' laws adopted in the previous Legislative Session, did pass but has not yet been signed by the Governor. Sheriff Watts said the attorney representing several Sheriffs in opposing the red flag laws recommends continuing with litigation because of the time period the laws were in effect.

UNR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Hoop House for Agricultural Extension: Extension Educator Gary McCuin contacted the Chairman recently to relay the need for another lambing shed, and the hoop house style structure offers a very cheap solution. The Chairman spoke to the Comptroller and sufficient funds were budgeted in the Agricultural Extension budget for the current fiscal year. In order to ensure delivery this fiscal year, authorization was given to order the structure.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve and ratify a capital outlay purchase of a new Hoop House and building material for Agricultural Extension, for a not to exceed amount of \$18,000.00. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

IT DEPARTMENT

IT Update: IT Director Misty Rowley reported on IT projects and activities. She continues installing two-factor authentication on the Sheriff's Office mobile devices, including moving the tablets to the domain and ensuring security and compliance. Ms. Rowley continues working on the Security Incident Response Plan. She is setting up E911, which will automatically display the telephone number and location of the caller. Cabinets and uninterruptable power supplies have been installed at the 3rd Street well and Diamond Valley Fire Station for the point to point connection in Diamond Valley. Syber Networks was here over the last weekend to assist with installation of a new firewall at the Eureka Library and continue working on fiber connections. Ms. Rowley is taking a course to become a certified Information Systems Security Professional.

Quest Media Quote: Now that County facilities have been cut over to the new fiber for an acceptable amount of time to prove viability, a quote was obtained to pull old fiber off of poles and out of buildings.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve Quote #014968v2 from Quest Media for the removal of old fiber and fiber splicing outside the Eureka Fire Station for a not to exceed amount of \$13,000.00 utilizing monies budgeted for fiber optic and network upgrades (042-140-55010-203) in the Capital Projects Fund. Commissioner McKay 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. In May, Eureka served 642 meals and Crescent Valley served 707 meals. The seniors are excited that monthly dinners will begin in June and are still discussing options for the seasonal trip. A total of \$7,471.05 was deposited for the month.

SHERIFF

Deputy Sheriff (K9) Job Description: Sheriff Jesse Watts worked with Human Resources to draft a job description for the Deputy Sheriffs that will handle the K9 Units, and he thanked Heidi Whimple for her hard work.

Two deputies, one from Crescent Valley and one from Eureka, are currently in Las Vegas training with the dogs and becoming certified K9 handlers/officers. Training was extended a bit because the deputies switched dogs until they found a good fit. Deputy Dylan Korth will return to Crescent Valley with Cooper, and Deputy Nick Collins will return to Eureka with Gara. The dogs are Cocker Spaniel and Labrador mix, and these two proved to be more motivated to search out narcotics and were less 'bite' aggressive than earlier dogs. The dogs will be fully trained to work and be deployed as soon as the officers return to the County.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve the new Deputy Sheriff (K9) job description; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

National Sheriffs' Association Annual Conference: Sheriff Watts wanted to update the Board about the upcoming Sheriffs' conference in Phoenix June 20th-25th. He was awarded a scholarship which will pay the conference fee and lodging for all but the first night. Expenses for the County will be fuel and per diem for the trip and lodging for the first night. He received the message that the Chairman preferred he travel in a car pool vehicle and not a patrol vehicle, but the Sheriff said he has decided to take his Sheriff's pickup because, as a first responder, he is required to stop and assist if there is an accident along the way.

JUSTICE COURT

Pre & Post Trial Supervision Officer/Bailiff Job Description: Human Resources Director Heidi Whimple requested approval of the new Pre & Post Trial Supervision Officer/Bailiff job description for the position that was budgeted for the upcoming fiscal year to address legislation that is placing additional requirements on Justice Courts. Once approved, she will submit it to PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) for a determination whether it qualifies as a law enforcement position. If approved as law enforcement, this position will be classified at range 125 LE; if not approved as law enforcement it will be classified at range 125.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve the Pre & Post Trial Supervision Officer/Bailiff job description at salary range 125 LE or salary range 125, dependent on PERS determination concerning law enforcement classification. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Hiring Freeze Waiver: Judge Dorothy Rowley submitted a Hiring Freeze Waiver Justification for the new position of Trial Supervision Officer/Bailiff. Commissioner McKay motioned to waive the hiring freeze and authorize Justice Court to fill the position of Pre & Post Trial Supervision Officer/Bailiff effective July 1, 2021. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Proposed Personnel Policy Update: HR Director Whimple gave a detailed review of proposed changes to update the Eureka County Personnel Policy. Many of the proposed changes were based on recommendations from Pray & Company, who the County contracted to review the policies. Some of the changes were recommended by POOL/PACT Human Resources from the HR Phase II Assessment Audit conducted in January.

All proposed changes were included in a redline version of the Personnel Policy attached to a draft resolution, which Ms. Whimple provided to the Board and will distribute electronically to all employees after Board action to propose the changes.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to propose a resolution to adopt changes to the Eureka County Personnel Policy, with the final resolution and policy changes to be considered at a public hearing at 10:00 a.m. on June 21, 2021. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

VFW POST 8194

Waiver of Facility Fees: The Board received a letter from Ralph Cuda, Quartermaster of VFW Post 8194, requesting that the County waive facility fees for the Post's annual events. His letter explained that each year the VFW rents the Opera House for its Memorial Day celebration and rents the ball fields for the softball tournament.

As a member of VFW Post 8194, Commissioner Sharkozy stated he would not vote on this matter. Prior to Board action, it was clarified that security deposits will continue to be required, and any waiver granted would be specific to the facility rental fees.

Commissioner McKay motioned to waive facility fees for annual events hosted by VFW Post 8194, which are the VFW Midsummer Classic Softball Tournament at the ball fields and the Memorial Day celebration at the Opera House (including the recent Memorial Day event), and this waiver will continue until further direction of the current or a future Board. Chairman Goicoechea seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Report on Activities: Jayme Halpin, Road Equipment Operator III, reported on Road Department projects and activities. The northern crew bladed Maggie Creek Road; repaired, replaced, and cleaned cattle guards; repaired fence; worked on the road and cleared brush in Safford Canyon; bladed and cleared brush through Frenchie Flat and up over Sadler Road. The

northern crew did cleanup work and relocated sprinklers at the Crescent Valley Town Park to assist the buildings & grounds crew.

The southern crew bladed Mustang Road, 7th Street, JD Ranch Road, Bailey Pass, Henderson Road, Vinini Road, Gold Street, cleaned culverts on Roberts Creek Road, and are currently working in Diamond Valley.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Update: Public Works Director Jeb Rowley had to leave the meeting for a conflicting meeting at 10:00 a.m. Assistant Director Joyce Jeppesen reported on projects and activities. All utility systems are working well. Painting in the cells and bathrooms at the Detention Facility is complete. Brick work is being done at the Sentinel Museum and the balcony of the Opera House.

COVID Vaccines: The next COVID-19 vaccination POD (point of dispensing) will be at the Ambulance Bay on June 23rd, and Pfizer vaccines will be available for those 12 to 15 years old.

Radio Network: Annual maintenance on radios and repeaters was completed. The technicians identified several receivers that need to be refurbished, modules that need to be replaced, and items on the Prospect Peak tower that need to be addressed, so there will be some upcoming costs related to those.

Extrication Training: Extrication training will be done on June 9th & 10th for the Eureka, Diamond Valley, Beowawe, and Crescent Valley Fire Departments; and Public Works is working to schedule more extrication training in July.

Airport Fuel Skid: Installation of the upgraded fuel skid system at the Eureka Airport is complete. Avfuel contacted Public Works and said the 1,060 gallons of Jet A fuel will need to be tested to determine if it's usable or must be pumped out. Test should be done in the next couple of days. The next fuel order is on hold pending results of the test.

Water Connections: All four of the water connections approved for Crescent Valley in recent meetings have been installed.

Crescent Valley Town Park: The roof is on the pavilion at the Crescent Valley Town Park, and the crew has started installing rafters.

Surplus Vehicle Request: Public Works received a letter from Healthy Paws of Eureka, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, requesting donation of a surplus vehicle to support transportation of animals and pickup and delivery of food. Ms. Jeppesen said there are currently no surplus vehicles, but Public Works is seeking approval to donate a vehicle when an appropriate one is declared surplus. It will still come before the Board to adopt a resolution memorializing donation of the vehicle.

Chairman Goicoechea recused himself from deliberating and voting on this item, explaining that he has provided veterinary services to this nonprofit organization.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner McKay stated he had some reservations, but motioned to approve the request from Public Works to identify a surplus vehicle for donation to Healthy Paws of Eureka. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Fannie Komp Storage Building: Ms. Jeppesen explained that costs of lumber and steel have inflated tremendously due to the pandemic. Public Works would like an additional allocation of \$4,500.00 to complete construction of the storage building for the Senior Center in Crescent Valley. This amount will include purchase and installation of a rollup door.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve an additional \$4,500.00 for the Fannie Komp Senior Center storage building utilizing monies budgeted for capital outlay in the Capital Projects Fund (042-140-55010-000). Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Wheel Loader Quote: Ms. Jeppesen explained that the lead time for large equipment has increased, so approval of the quotes for the requested equipment will secure a build slot for the County.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve Caterpillar Quote #132478-01 (Sourcewell Contract #032119-CAT) for a new Caterpillar Model 966M-BR Wheel Loader, in an amount not to exceed \$422,491.99, utilizing funds budgeted for capital outlay in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Road Department budget. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Motorgrader: Commissioner McKay motioned to approve Caterpillar Quote #130014-01 (Sourcewell Contract #032119-CAT) for a new Caterpillar Model 150JOY-LR Motorgrader, in an amount not to exceed \$396,675.56, utilizing funds budgeted for capital outlay in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Road Department budget. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Report on Activities: Natural Resources Manager Jake Tibbitts reported on recent activities.

Diamond Valley GMP Case: Oral arguments were heard on June 2nd by the Nevada Supreme Court in the case concerning the Diamond Valley Groundwater Management Plan. Mr. Tibbitts watched the hearing via the virtual connection. He explained there are about four years remaining on the Critical Management Area designation for the Diamond Valley Basin, so it is important for the Court to make a timely decision to give water users some direction.

Weed Control: Tri-County Weed Control has been contracted to do some weed control work in Eureka County. Mr. Tibbitts said they are professionals, do a lot of good work, and don't need assistance and guidance, so it was fortunate the crew was available for a couple of weeks.

Mormon Crickets: Mormon crickets are being seen, not as heavily as in some other counties, but can become concentrated in an area as they migrate through. Mr. Tibbitts advised the best thing to do, if you can tolerate the nuisance, is to just let them migrate through. They are cannibalistic, so baiting and killing them without sweeping them up will attract more crickets.

To treat Mormon crickets on public lands, Nevada Department of Agriculture works with the US Department of Agriculture APHIS (Animal Plant Health Inspection Service) to do an EA (Environmental Assessment). Then the local BLM has to sign a Pesticide Use Proposal or PUP. There has been a delay with the BLM, so Mr. Tibbitts has contacted the Battle Mountain District and urged them to sign the PUP, but as of meeting time, there had been no response.

Goldrush Mine Project: Mr. Tibbitts and Consulting Hydrogeologist Dale Bugenig will meet later in the day with Kim Wolf of Nevada Gold Mines regarding water related issues. There is an agreement with the mine to develop a 3M (monitoring, management, and mitigation) Plan to deal with water impacts from the Goldrush Mine Project, and Mr. Tibbitts said they are about 90% done.

Upcoming Meetings: On June 8th, at the request of the BLM, Mr. Tibbitts is meeting with the Battle Mountain District BLM and a private ranch owner who reported that wild horses are getting on his private meadows. The Natural Resources Advisory Commission will meet on June 9th. On June 10th, the Nevada Section Society for Range Management is hosting a cheat grass tour and Mr. Tibbitts will attend that; most of the tour is in Eureka County. The Nevada Division of Water Resources is hosting two workshops – one concerning regulations on June 16th, and one regarding extensions of time for proof of beneficial use on June 18th. The County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife has scheduled its next meeting on June 17th.

Grazing Issues: Mr. Tibbitts has been working on a comment letter in response to the US Forest Service Austin-Tonopah Ranger District Notice of Proposed Action for the Monitor-Toquima Range Vacant Allotment Project. He would like NRAC to review the response at the June 9th meeting. Comments must be submitted before the next Commission meeting, so he asked for approval to incorporate NRAC's input and submit the response before the deadline.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to authorize the Natural Resources Manager to work with the Natural Resources Advisory Commission to finalize comments on the US Forest Service Austin-Tonopah Ranger District Notice of Proposed Action for the Monitor-Toquima Range Vacant

Allotment Project, and authorized the Chairman to sign the response outside of the meeting. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

On other grazing issues, Mr. Tibbitts received a call from the Battle Mountain BLM District Manager concerning drought related grazing implications. The BLM is going to start hauling water to certain Herd Management Areas, as authorized under the drought EAs completed several years ago. The BLM wants to talk with the County and work with grazing permittees on how these drought responses will be managed.

Chairman Goicoechea said he wanted the record to reflect that hauling water in these situations is not ecologically sustainable, so Eureka County expects some emergency wild horse removals to follow closely behind any water hauls.

BLM Resource Advisory Councils: The BLM Resource Advisory Councils have been inactive for a while, but the BLM has combined regional areas and restructured them into two regional RACs, the Mojave Southern Great Basin RAC and the Sierra Front Northern Great Basin RAC. One covers northern Eureka County and the other covers southern Eureka County. At its upcoming meeting, NRAC will nominate a member for each RAC, and Mr. Tibbitts requested Eureka County's support of the nominations.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to support nominations made by the Natural Resources Advisory Commission for the two regional BLM Resource Advisory Councils. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Hiring Freeze Waivers: Mr. Tibbitts requested authority to immediately advertise and hire a Department Assistant for a temporary overlap of two employees to allow for training. The Department Assistant who is leaving has agreed to stay on as a casual employee to make this an efficient transition.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to waive the hiring freeze and authorize the Natural Resources Manager to hire a Department Assistant. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Tibbitts requested authorization to fill the Weed Control & Resource Technician position that was budgeted for the upcoming fiscal year. Commissioner McKay motioned to waive the hiring freeze and authorize the Natural Resources Director to fill the Weed Control & Resource Technician position, effective July 1st. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

GENESIS HOME HEALTH

Background: Dr. Querubin "Jun" Iguban and Judy Covarrubias, LPN, were in attendance to discuss services to Eureka County. Ms. Covarrubias said she works for Genesis Home Health Services as a nurse and manages the personal care aide program in Eureka. Genesis was founded by two local physicians in June of 2004, and has been serving Nevada for 17 years. Genesis provides services in Elko, Eureka, Lander, Humboldt, Pershing, and White Pine Counties, and is rated by Medicare as a five-star agency. She described the services provided by Genesis including hospice care, home health care, and personal care assistance.

Ms. Covarrubias said Genesis has been providing skilled nursing care to Eureka clients using County indigent funds for nearly ten years. Two years ago, personal care assistance was added, and last year hospice was added to the current fiscal year's contract.

Commissioner McKay said he has been working closely with Genesis and supports the care and services they provide. The reason this was placed on the agenda was to work to ensure that future contracts are very clear on defining the responsibilities of the County and the responsibilities of the provider, since the current year's contract has gotten off-track.

It recently came to light that Genesis has been adding clients to the personal care aide program for financial assistance from the County without approval from the Human Services Director. The contract identifies the Director as having sole responsibility for determining eligibility per the County's indigent standards outlined in County Code, and NRS Chapter 428.

Direction for Future Contract: The current contract ends June 30th, and discussion and direction were needed related to the contract going forward. A lengthy discussion ensued. Many of the clients currently receiving financial assistance from the County, through this contract, do not qualify under the County's indigent standards and NRS 428.015. Other clients have been added when Medicaid or other insurance wouldn't pay for a service. It was clarified and reiterated that anyone with any type of insurance whatsoever does not qualify for this financial assistance. Many of these people should have never been added under the contract, but should have remained private-pay patients.

Because of the income and insurance restrictions, Commissioner McKay would like to finance the contract with other County monies that are not tied to these strict income limits. He feels the services being provided are important and he is in favor of funding this contract to the full amount.

Human Services Director Millie Oram suggested that, if the County can find another source of funding, she could apply the income standards used for Food Bank to determine eligibility, because very few, if any, qualify under the County's indigent standards.

Chairman Goicoechea noted that the budget beginning July 1st has already been finalized and did not contemplate taking funds from a different account to support this contract. Therefore, some money might be identified, but it will not be feasible to find \$40,000.00 from unbudgeted sources. The Chairman further cautioned that indigent funds absolutely cannot be used to pay for services to clients whose incomes exceed those in County Code and NRS.

Chairman Goicoechea added that the contract identifies that the provider, Genesis, will coordinate clients through the Human Services Director, Millie Oram. No client should ever receive services under the contract without her approval. He asked Genesis to improve communication with Ms. Oram in that regard, and noted that Administrative Assistant Jackie Berg helps manage the contract on the financial end to ensure dollar limits aren't exceeded.

As stated in earlier emails to Genesis from County staff, the Chairman reiterated that Genesis has other patients who are insured or private-pay, and Eureka County is in no way trying to tell Genesis how to manage those patients and clients. The sideboards placed in this contract strictly relate to patients and clients who qualify as indigent per County Code and State law.

Ms. Covarrubias asked if Genesis could get some clear direction on income guidelines, stating that Genesis has never received that from the County. Ms. Berg responded that the contract clearly lists the steps to determine eligibility, and clearly states no person receives this financial assistance without prior approval by Ms. Oram.

Jessica Santoyo, representing the Comptroller's office, suggested that contract negotiations take place before budgets are finalized in May of each year. Last year \$32,000.00 was budgeted for this contract, then the contract was approved at \$40,000.00, and has already exceeded its budget for Fiscal Year 2021. Now there is talk about adding other monies for Fiscal Year 2022 when only indigent funds were budgeted. This cannot happen year after year.

The Chairman asked that the Genesis contract be placed on the next agenda. In the meantime, the budget can be reviewed to see if any funding can be found from another source. One suggested source was the Commissioners' miscellaneous grants, but he cautioned that any money taken from that account will diminish what the County can give in other grants, assistance, and scholarships.

DIAMOND VALLEY GROUNDWATER MONITORING

Monitoring Program Update: Dale Bugenig, Consulting Hydrogeologist, gave a detailed update and slide presentation showing results of the groundwater monitoring in Diamond Valley, which has been ongoing for ten years. The monitoring network is comprised of data loggers installed on about a dozen wells to track groundwater levels. Half of the loggers are maintained by Eureka County and half are maintained by Diamond Natural Resources Protection & Conservation Association.

Mr. Bugenig commented that 2020 was a very dry year, equating to an additional six inches of irrigation water being applied to crops to make up for water that should have been supplied from precipitation. Naturally, the rate of water level decline increased and is steeper than what has been recorded in all previous years. There were some small gains (reduction in rate of water level decline) with the soft start of the Groundwater Management Plan in 2019, a year that had decent precipitation, but now the Plan is in limbo pending a court decision.

One shallower well provides data on water levels above the widespread clay layer, and water levels are not trending down as they are in the deeper wells. Matt Morrison has several shallow wells that he monitors manually (these are not included in the monitoring system), and he is seeing water levels come up. This is supported by monitoring data from the State Engineer and US Geological Survey, and indicates secondary recharge from irrigation that can take years to detect. Data from these shallow wells is important to the overall study, because it proves the separation between the shallow and the deeper levels.

The other well that stands out from the others is the furthest to the northwest, where the water level has plummeted (seven feet in three years) in direct response to a large irrigation well in the vicinity that Sadler Ranch began pumping nearly three years ago.

Monitoring began on the Kobeh Valley test well in May 2020, and it is showing an interesting response. The water level has dropped 2.5 feet over the past year, in a region where very little water is being pumped. So, it may be showing that pumping in Diamond Valley is propagating through what were thought impermeable rocks in Kobeh Valley, or it may be showing trends of a larger region. The US Geological Survey monitoring wells in the area also have declining water levels. It may be worthwhile to include that data.

Purchase of Data Loggers: Mr. Bugenig relayed that, although a few data loggers have been replaced and are relatively new and others have had external battery packs installed, most are the age of the monitoring system and reaching end-of-life. Mr. Tibbitts advised that the current budget would support purchase of some new loggers.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to purchase two data loggers for the Diamond Valley Groundwater Monitoring Program utilizing funds budgeted in the current fiscal year. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was received from: Natural Resources, Jake Tibbitts; Natural Resources Advisory Commission; Recreation Board; Flyer: Legends of the West Bike & Car Fest; Nevada Assoc. of Counties (2); Nevada Div. of Water Resources; Allison MacKenzie Ltd.; Nevada Dept. of Taxation; Nevada Dept. of Agriculture; UNR College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources; Senator Ira Hansen; US Dept. of the Interior, BLM; US Senator Jacky Rose; Pikes Peak Land; Governing electronic newsletters (multiple); American First Policy Institute (multiple); and National Assoc. of Counties (multiple).

Commissioner Reports: Commissioner Goicoechea reported that, as County Health Officer, he had to close the Crescent Valley School on June 4th, and the start of summer school was postponed a week, due to confirmation of a norovirus outbreak at the school that potentially affected 68% of the students (the number that went home sick or didn't report to school). The source is likely food that was delivered for the end-of-school party the day before. Food poisoning was initially suspected, but testing confirmed the norovirus outbreak. In addition to closure notice, he sent proper protocols for cleaning, bleach concentrations, and timeline for facility closure. The Chairman thanked Ms. Berg because the formal letter had to be typed, signed, and delivered to the Superintendent immediately.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Goicoechea called for public comments; there were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m.; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Approved by vote of the Board this 6th day of July, 2021.

/s/ J.J. Goicoechea

J.J. Goicoechea, Chairman

I, Jackie Berg, Commissioner Administrative Assistant, attest that these are a true, correct, and duly approved minutes of the June 7, 2021, meeting of the Board of Eureka County Commissioners.

/s/ Jackie Berg

Jackie Berg, Commissioner Administrative Asst.

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 Commissioner Administrative Assistant.

/s/ Lisa Hoehne

Lisa Hoehne, Clerk