

**EUREKA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**July 6, 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 July 6, 2021. Present were Chairman J.J. Goicoechea, Vice Chair Michael Sharkozy, Commissioner Rich McKay, District Attorney Ted Beutel, and Administrative Assistant Jackie Berg. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. The interactive video conferencing system was connected and utilized between Crescent Valley and Eureka for the entire meeting.

**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.

Assistant Public Works Director Joyce Jeppesen announced that Ree Taylor is retiring after 19 years with Eureka County working at the Sentinel Museum. Ms. Taylor began working for Eureka County in May 2002 as a casual worker and was soon moved to full-time. Ms. Jeppesen said she wanted to officially thank Ree for 19 years of hard work, noting she is a wealth of knowledge and will be greatly missed. Ms. Taylor’s official retirement date is August 7<sup>th</sup> and her last day of work will be July 10<sup>th</sup>.

There were no further public comments.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

June 7, 2021: Commissioner McKay motioned to approve minutes of the June 7, 2021, Commission meeting; Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

**COMPTROLLER**

Payment of Expenditures: Expenditures were presented for approval by Comptroller Kim Todd. Payables included four receipts exceeding the six-month limit for purchases made in November by a Sheriff’s Office employee. Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve reimbursement of four receipts in the amounts of \$152.99, \$205.00, \$176.00, and \$277.45. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to approve expenditures in the amount of \$691,978.08 for accounts payable, \$572,436.30 for payroll and benefit related expenses (including employee paid deductions), \$210,845.97 for a pass-through tax allocation to the Nevada State Controller, \$38,579.37 for a pass-through to the Eureka County School District, \$2,030.00 for a pass-through to the Nevada Division of Minerals, \$515.25 for a pass-through to the Nevada Department of Taxation, and \$132.00 for a pass-through to the Washoe County Crime Lab, for a grand total of \$1,516,516.97. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Fund Balance Report: The Board reviewed a report showing current balances of all funds under the Board’s jurisdiction.

**COMMISSIONERS**

Genesis Home Health Services: Commissioner McKay has been working with Genesis Home Health Services to develop a contract for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. He wants to expand the services provided under the contract by identifying an additional funding source.

The contract with Genesis has been budgeted and paid completely with indigent funds and, therefore, only persons meeting the strict income guidelines outlined in NRS 428.015 are eligible to receive this assistance. But it was recently discovered that most, if not all, of the people receiving services under this contract do not qualify as indigent.

Commissioner McKay said he would like to continue providing housekeeping services to the senior population, but recognized that indigent funds cannot be used. He proposed expanding the contract to continue providing services to persons who are not indigent. He also voiced concerns that seniors, who have moved to Eureka from out of state to access senior housing and other services, have placed an additional burden on this contract.

Chairman Goicoechea cautioned that expanding services in a contract without vetting the funding through the budget process (as the indigent portion was), is not providing the public full disclosure. He reiterated that no monies were budgeted for housecleaning and non-indigent services in Fiscal Year 2021-2022, as the only monies budgeted for this contract were the indigent funds. The Chairman has heard negative feedback about the County paying for housecleaning, including criticism that the County is infringing on the private sector and competing with private business. If the Board does consider including this service, he felt a request for proposals should be advertised.

Upon conclusion of the lengthy discussion, the Board agreed that a request for proposals should be prepared for consideration at a future meeting, after investigating how other counties provide these types of services.

## **IT DEPARTMENT**

IT Update: IT Director Misty Rowley reported on IT projects and activities. Syber Networks visited to assist with network maintenance and to finalize a server upgrade. Ms. Rowley is working on a standardized template for lease/rental of tower space. Dialing plans were updated to support the new nationwide 988 suicide prevention hotline. The IT Department has been working with Quest Media to implement the E911 software and engineering changes, which will automatically display the telephone number and location of the caller. Data migration to the upgraded RIMS record management system at the Sheriff's Office was completed.

Networking Equipment: Ms. Rowley explained that she was able to negotiate a reduced price on networking equipment. She asked the Board to postpone taking action until the next meeting, since quantities and dollar amounts have changed from what was originally published on the agenda.

## **AMBULANCE & EMS**

Report on Activities: Advanced EMT Shealene French reported there were 34 calls for ambulance service in June, 22 from the Eureka station and 12 from the Crescent Valley station. Of those, seven were transferred to air medical services.

Hiring Freeze Waiver: The Board reviewed the Hiring Freeze Waiver Justification for the additional full-time EMT position budgeted in Fiscal Year 2021-2022. Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to waive the hiring freeze and authorize the EMS Director to fill the position of EMT I, II, or III to be stationed in Crescent Valley; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

Pickup Purchase: Commissioner McKay motioned to authorize purchase of a 3/4-ton crew cab pickup truck from Champion Chevrolet utilizing Nevada Purchasing Division Master Blanket Purchase Order 99SWC-NV19-2037, including after-market upfitting, for a not to exceed amount of \$55,000.00 utilizing funds budgeted for capital outlay (010-054-55010-000) in the Ambulance/EMS budget. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

## **SHERIFF**

National Night Out: Sheriff Jesse Watts presented a proclamation declaring August 3<sup>rd</sup> as National Night Out, an event to bring law enforcement and the community together. He explained that simultaneous events will be held in both Eureka and Crescent Valley. Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to adopt the 2021 National Night Out Proclamation; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; motion carried 3-0.

## **ROAD DEPARTMENT**

Report on Activities: Assistant Public Works Director Raymond Hodson reported on Road Department projects and activities. Blading was completed on all roads in the 3 Bars area not covered by the MOU with McEwen Mining (Santa Fe, Ferguson, and connector roads). That blade has moved on to Tonkin Springs. A blade is currently working in Diamond Valley and, prior to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday, bladed several outlying roads and the fire breaks. A blade has been operating on the JD Ranch Road and surrounding area, including Grass Valley all the way to the Gund Ranch and McClusky Road. Secondary roads bladed were Rocky Canyon Road, Dry Hills Road, and the Cottonwood Canyon area.

The Crescent Valley crew and some of the Eureka crew have been assisting with the upgrades and work at the Crescent Valley Town Park all month. Mr. Hodson reported that project should be complete in about a week.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

Public Works Update: Public Works Director Jeb Rowley reported on Public Works projects and activities.

COVID Vaccines: Mr. Rowley said Public Works continues administering the COVID vaccine program with assistance from EMS. The number of vaccines given remains consistent but low. Eureka County currently has the Moderna vaccine in stock, and there are reports that it is the most effective against the Delta variant.

Water Systems: Water quality testing for Eureka, Crescent Valley, and Devil's Gate was completed and final reports have been posted. Mr. Rowley is working on a water conservation plan with consultant, Abby Johnson, and he thanked Jake Tibbitts and Dale Bugenig for assistance in reviewing the information.

Emergency Response MOU: Public Works, EMS, and the Sheriff's Office met the previous week with Nevada Gold Mines regarding the Emergency Response Memorandum of Understanding. Everyone will meet again on July 15<sup>th</sup> to review the final revisions.

Crescent Valley Town Park: The Crescent Valley Town Park project will be complete after another concrete pour and final cleanup. Mr. Rowley thanked everyone for their patience while members of the various Public Works crews postponed regular assignments to assist on the project.

4<sup>th</sup> of July: There was a good turnout for holiday events and fireworks and crews are working to pack up tables, benches, etc., from Main Street.

Extrication Training: Extrication training is scheduled July 27<sup>th</sup> in Crescent Valley for the northern fire departments.

Crescent Valley Base Station: Equipment is expected any day and Western States Enterprises will begin installation of the radio base station in Crescent Valley.

Water Line Improvements: Dean Day with Day Engineering is executing plans for the spring water line improvement projects, near the ballfields in Eureka and near Sera Way in Devil's Gate. Both sites will require boring under the highway, and the State has new requirements that lines under State highways must now be encased, an addition that wasn't anticipated during the budget process.

Statement of Qualifications – FBO: Mr. Rowley presented the Request for Statement of Qualifications for an independent contractor for Fixed Base Operator (FBO) services at the Eureka

Airport. The updated requirements align with recommendations made by POOL/PACT Human Resources concerning independent contractors, including the FBO. The District Attorney reviewed the document and provided some additions.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve the Request for Statement of Qualifications for Fixed Base Operator services at the Eureka Airport and directed staff to begin advertising immediately. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

FBO Selection: Mr. Rowley asked for direction on selecting the FBO independent contractor. The Commissioners agreed that Mr. Rowley and Public Works staff were knowledgeable about the needs of the Airport, and directed that they select the top ranked candidate and make a recommendation to the Board.

Airport Coronavirus Response Grant: Mr. Rowley asked for ratification of a grant made available by the Federal Aviation Administration with COVID response funds. Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to ratify the Airport Coronavirus Response Grant for the Eureka Airport in the amount of \$9,000.00. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

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

Department Assistant: The new Department Assistant, Shasta Blackeye-Adair, has just started (transferring from another department) and the former employee has agreed to remain as a casual worker for a training and transition period.

Weed Control & Resources Technician: The Weed Control & Resources Technician position has been filled and the person will begin on July 12<sup>th</sup>.

Diamond Valley Adjudication: There are a lot of documents going back and forth and depositions being scheduled in relation to the court case on the Diamond Valley Adjudication. Eureka County's experts and witnesses will be deposed the last week of July in Reno at the US Attorney's Office. The BLM witnesses will be deposed in August concerning the claims of Public Water Reserves.

Weed Control: Tri-County Weed Control was contracted to do some work in Eureka County in June, and two full crews were here for the allotted time and completed a lot of treatment.

Upcoming Meetings: The State Land Use Planning Advisory Council will meet on July 9<sup>th</sup> (chaired by Mr. Tibbitts); one of the main topics will be a presentation by the BLM on the Statewide Resource Management Plan revision. Ruby Hill Mine is working to schedule a Community Advisory Committee meeting; they are considering July 13<sup>th</sup>, but haven't yet confirmed that date. The Natural Resources Advisory Commission will meet the evening of July 14<sup>th</sup>. The Nevada Division of Water Resources has scheduled a stakeholder meeting on July 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss water legislation adopted in the Legislative Session.

Drought Issues: The Battle Mountain District BLM recently sent notice of a District Wide Emergency Drought Water Hauling Authorization, which was authorized under a Drought Management EA done in 2012. Plans are to authorize up to 20 water hauls for horses, livestock, or both.

Mr. Tibbitts referenced the most recent Drought Response Index, which confirmed hydrologic drought but showed that vegetation was doing well because of the timing of the precipitation received. The Vegetative Drought Index for Nevada showed most of the Battle Mountain District area had improved vegetation when compared to a year ago. The supports the need for water hauls, when feed exists but water does not. Mr. Tibbitts prepared a letter with Eureka County's comments in response to the water haul authorization. Among other things, the letter points out that the response to current drought conditions may not be appropriate when other drought conditions exist. The letter encourages continued coordination with Eureka County on range improvement efforts.

Commissioner McKay motioned to approve and send the letter in response to the BLM Battle Mountain District Wide Emergency Drought Water Hauling Authorization. Commissioner Sharkozy seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Nevada Division of Water Resources Proposed Regulations: Mr. Tibbitts explained that the Division of Water Resource has proposed two sets of regulations and has begun holding workshops, which Mr. Tibbitts and water attorney, Karen Peterson, have been engaged in and have provided testimony. The two sets of proposed regulations are related to: (1) administrative hearings before the State Engineer, and (2) applications for extensions of time on proofs of construction of works and proofs of beneficial use. Mr. Tibbitts remarked that the first revision to the proposed regulations contained substantial improvements, and included quite a few of the County's word-for-word changes. Mr. Tibbitts prepared written comments on the regulations and asked for the Board's input and final approval.

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to submit written comments to the Nevada Division of Water Resources on the proposed regulations and authorized the Chairman to sign the letters outside of the meeting. Commissioner McKay seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence was received from: Eureka County Student Council; Public Works; Crescent Valley Town Advisory Board (2); Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority; Nevada Assoc. of Counties; Nevada Humane Society; Pony Express Territory newsletter; Nevada Dept. of Agriculture; Nevada Dept. of Business & Industry; University of Nevada Reno UCED newsletter; Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Coordinating Committee; US Dept of the Interior-BLM; Secretary of the Interior; US Forest Service; America First Policy Institute (multiple); Governing electronic newsletter (multiple); and National Assoc. of Counties (multiple).

Commissioner Updates: Chairman Goicoechea announced that the next Sagebrush Ecosystem Council meeting will be in Eureka at the Opera House on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, and he is hosting a barbeque in the Eureka Town Park the evening of July 22<sup>nd</sup>. He asked that a Notice of Attendance be posted so all Commissioners may attend the barbeque and meeting if they wish.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Goicoechea called for public comments; there were none.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Sharkozy motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner McKay seconded the motion; the meeting was adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

*Approved by vote of the Board this 6<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2021.*

/s/ J.J. Goicoechea, DVM  
J.J. Goicoechea, Chairman

*I, Jackie Berg, Commissioner Administrative Assistant, attest that these are a true, correct, and duly approved minutes of the July 6, 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