

**LASSEN COUNTY LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION**  
City Council Chambers      66 N. Lassen St.      Susanville, CA 96130

REGULAR MEETING  
Monday, February 14, 2022

Meeting called to order at 3:05 p.m.

Members present: Commissioner Gallagher, Commissioner Bridges, Vice Chair Schuster, and Chair Eid.  
Absent: Commissioner Stafford.

Staff Present: John Benoit, Executive Director and Ruth McElrath, Building Permit Technician.

**Approval of Agenda** Motion by Commissioner Gallagher, second by Commissioner Bridges, to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion carries: Ayes: Gallagher, Bridges, Schuster, and Eid.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Benoit stated he received communication from the Rural Telecommunications JPA; a notice for a new Williamson Act in Bieber, and a letter from Lassen County addressing a CEQA report being conducted by the State for the closure of the California Correctional Center.

**Approval of December 13, 2021, minutes** Motion by Vice Chair Schuster, second by Commissioner Bridges to approve the December 13, 2021, minutes. Motion carries: Ayes: Schuster, Bridges, Gallagher, and Eid.

**Public Comment:** None

**Discussion with Fire Agencies regarding Fire and EMS services going forward in Lassen County (Continued)**

At the Commission's request, Mr. Benoit researched the matter and explained LAFCo does not regulate JPA's. The exception is if an agency within the County enters a JPA, then it must be sent to LAFCo.

A JPA can take on several forms, but Mr. Benoit added it does not absolve a district from preparing an annual audit and a board of directors will be required. JPAs are useful for training, seeking grant funding, etc., and it is a creative approach for providing public services in a cost-effective manner.

Mr. Benoit stated it is highly recommended that counsel reviews documents when forming a JPA. Initially, a committee with members from each district will be formed to determine who are the participating agencies, what are the boundaries, when are services going to start, who the governing body will be, who is going to maintain the books, etc.

Mr. Benoit explained there also must be termination provisions. If a district wants to remove itself from a JPA, it can take five to ten years to do it because immediately dropping out can put other agencies in peril.

There was general discussion about what the steps would be in moving forward - interest, forming a committee, and determining the JPA's powers.

Paul Smith, Standish-Litchfield Fire Protection District Chief, said organization within the leadership, being on the same page, and having shared equipment and training is important. In conclusion, he stated it is difficult getting trained board members.

Commissioner Gallagher commented that it is complicated to get exactly what you want in a JPA and who is going to be involved.

Irene Doyle, of the Milford Fire Protection District, asked what the funding mechanism is, because that would be a big item for districts.

James Moore, Susanville Fire Department Chief, explained each participating district contracts with and pays the JPA. He stated a JPA increases a district's buying power for equipment, staffing, and valuable training.

Ms. Doyle explained that Milford Fire District's income is \$16,000 in assessments.

Chief Moore responded Milford may not want to contract into a JPA but explained it could leverage that \$16,000.

Ms. Doyle asked what it would do for people's power to elect their representatives.

Commissioner Gallagher responded the district would appoint whatever member it wanted to serve on the JPA board.

The Commission held further discussion regarding how a JPA would function including administrative duties.

Chief Moore concluded that this is information for options, it is not being driven. What they are seeing are districts who want to provide a service but are unable to and this is a great solution, it does not change boundaries or districts and you can get out. We wanted to bring it forward so districts understand there are solutions that might help.

#### **LAFCo Policy Amendment regarding proposed language regarding MSR follow up as part of the MSR review process**

Mr. Benoit explained he drafted a policy amendment which requires agencies to come back and explain how they are progressing and addressing any issues that LAFCo highlighted in the MSR report. He continued the MSRs were recently completed in other counties, and districts are woefully missing the mark, so we want to follow-up with them.

Commissioner Gallagher questioned whether it would be more beneficial to have a pre-MSR meeting rather than a meeting after the report is approved. He added he would hate to do a five-year review, pass it then find out it is not what a district is currently doing.

Motion by Commissioner Gallagher, second by Vice Chair Schuster to approve Resolution 2022-003, adopting an amendment to LAFCo's policies, standards and procedures and adding Section 3.33e, regarding a new policy regarding MSR follow up. motion carries. Ayes: Gallagher, Schuster, Bridges, and Eid. Absent: Stafford.

#### **Public hearing regarding the Lassen Municipal Utility District MSR and SOI update**

Public hearing opened at 3:50 p.m.

Mr. Benoit commented a change needed to be made in the report and that is LMUD does not provide electricity to the prison. He further explained LMUD is up to date on its audits, and he included a cost-comparison report.

Public hearing closed at 3:55 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Gallagher, second by Vice Chair Schuster to approve Resolutions 2021-001 and 2022-002. Motion carries: Ayes: Gallagher, Schuster, Bridges and Eid. Absent: Stafford.

**Discussion and action regarding the storage of LAFCo files**

Mr. Benoit stated Lassen County is wanting the files removed from their present location at 707 Nevada St. There's about 50 years of stuff in 16 boxes that he is trying to reduce by half, but they need a place to store them.

There was brief discussion about contacting the County regarding the matter.

**Authorize payment of claims**

Motion by Commissioner Bridges, second by Vice Chair Schuster, to approve payment of claims for December 2021 and January 2022. Motion carries. Ayes: Bridges, Schuster, Gallagher, and Eid. Absent: Stafford.

**Executive Officer's Monthly Report:**

Commissioners were informed 700 forms are due April 1, 2022.

Mr. Benoit gave an update on the service reviews and that the Commission can look at what reviews they are going to do during the budget hearing at the next meeting.

**Commissioner Reports None**

Motion by Commissioner Bridges to adjourn meeting at 3:46 p.m. Motion carries.

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Todd Eid, Commissioner

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Ruth McElrath, Building Permit Technician

Approved\_\_\_\_\_