

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

REGULAR MEETING  
Monday, April 11, 2022

Meeting called to order at 3:08 p.m.

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

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

Commissioner Gallagher elected to serve as meeting chair.

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

**Correspondence:** None

**Approval of the February 14, 2022, meeting minutes** Motion by Commissioner Bridges, second by Commissioner Stafford to approve the February 14, 2022, meeting minutes. Motion carries: Ayes: Bridges, Stafford, McCourt, and Gallagher.

**Public Comment:** None

**Discussion with Fire Agencies regarding Fire services going forward in Lassen County**

Mr. Benoit explained the fire chiefs will have to get together and determine what a JPA is going to do and seek an attorney to help them get through the process.

The Commission held further discussion regarding JPAs, an existing JPA, and whether that entity would want its power extended.

As part of the fire discussion, Chair Gallagher added CalFire has grants available for different fire agencies, although not large grants, there is one for approximately \$20,000 for equipment.

Trisha Wood, of the Herlong Public Utility District, responded her district received the grant last year, but there are stipulations, It is a 50/50 match with \$20,000 paid out of pocket and a \$10,000 reimbursement. It includes communications and wildland equipment.

**Public hearing regarding the 2022-2023 Lassen LAFCo budget**

Mr. Benoit said this would be his last budget as he will be cutting back. He continued that there has been 18 years of stable inflation, and he was going to ask for an increase for the executive officer services to keep it sustainable, as well as to cover training time.

Mr. Benoit continued explaining that CALAFCo dues have also gone up by \$69, and he increased the executive officer's budget from \$30,000 to \$40,000. There has been a good carry-over, and what the City/County pays will be the same this year. He has been charging on an hourly basis, but he added it must go up, because other rural counties are much higher than this. The budget here is still small.

He concluded that after the final budget, the Commission should appoint several people to negotiate with Ms. Stephenson and he would want an exit contract in case LAFCo was sued and he was named in a lawsuit.

Chair Gallagher commented that Mr. Benoit made good points in his staff report regarding gas prices and inflation, etc.

Ms. Stephenson shared a little bit about her background with LAFCo, including serving as a deputy for Mr. Benoit.

Public hearing opened at 3:29 p.m.

Public hearing closed at 3:30 p.m.

Commissioner McCourt asked what LAFCo's funding source is.

Mr. Benoit responded it is funded by both the City and County, and he had advised a different City they could pay for LAFCo out of its enterprise fund, but it is up to the City how it will be funded.

Commissioner McCourt asked where he could research if enterprise funds could help pay into LAFCo.

Mr. Benoit responded he should talk to the Finance Manager. He continued that he did not know of any prohibitions for using enterprise funds and stated that fund has an admin budget, and a portion could pay for LAFCo.

A discussion was held regarding how districts pay fees.

Sandy Raffelson, of the Herlong Public Utility District, shared a brief history about her district.

Commissioner McCourt asked about record keeping, specifically the historic annexation map, and if it is part of the budget.

Mr. Benoit responded it is all in the budget, and the function is to keep the records of the commission. Lately, staff has been moving to electronic copies, as opposed to paper. There are a lot of hard copies and

there is a records retention policy, which will be brought back for re-examination. The most important thing is, if there is a fire, that there is a recorded document at the County Recorder's office.

Motion by Commissioner Bridges, second by Commissioner Gallagher, to approve Resolution 2021-0004 adopting the proposed 2022-2023 LAFCo budget. Motion carries: Ayes: Bridges, Stafford, McCourt, and Gallagher.

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

This was a continuing matter and Mr. Benoit explained he has purged duplicate files and budgets, and he has electronic files.

Chair Gallagher suggested storing files with the County Clerk.

Mr. Benoit responded a lot of people have them professionally scanned, then the records get sent off-site, which a lot of agencies do.

Ms. Stephenson added Plumas County is scanning in a drop box system so its online allowing herself, Planning and the Clerk have access to them.

Mr. Benoit said that is a good idea and he would even go so far as to make them available to the public.

**Authorize payment of claims for February 2022 and March 2022**

Motion by Commissioner Bridges, second by Commissioner Stafford, to authorize payment of claims for February 2022 and March 2022. Motion carries: Ayes: Bridges, Stafford, McCourt, and Gallagher.

**Executive Officer's Monthly Reports**

There was discussion regarding forming a committee to negotiate a contract with Ms. Stephenson. She stated she could bring a draft contract back to the Commission, and the Commission agreed.

Mr. Benoit addressed Senate Bill 938 and explained LAFCo has convoluted, complex protest proceeding. The bill, sponsored by CALAFCo, will simplify the process.

**Commissioner Reports:** None

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

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Chris Gallagher, Commissioner

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Ruth McElrath, Building Permit Technician

Approved \_\_\_\_\_