



MARCH 20, 2024
ADOPTED MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. in the City of Eureka Council Chambers and via Zoom video conference with Chair Bushnell presiding.

2. FLAG SALUTE

3. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Michelle Bushnell, Debra Lake, Ali Lee, Mike Losey, Steve Madrone*, and Troy Nicolini
Members Absent: Steve Ladwig
Alternates Present: Gordon Johnson
Alternates Absent: Heidi Benzonelli, Jack West, and Mike Wilson
Staff: Colette Santsche, Executive Officer
Krystle Heaney, Clerk
Ryan Plotz, Attorney

*Commissioner Madrone left at 10:00am.

It was requested that the agenda be reordered to hold Item 7 – Public Hearing Items after the consent calendar and before Item 6 – Business Items.

Motion Madrone/Losey to move the public hearings in the agenda. Motion passed by 6-0-0 voice vote.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A) Approval of January 17, Regular Meeting Minutes**
- B) Letter of Support Assembly Bill 3277 (Ad Valorem Property Tax; Formations)**
- C) Letter of Support Senate Bill 1209 (Indemnification)**

Motion Losey/Madrone to approve the consent calendar with minor corrections. Motion passed by 6-0-0 voice vote.

7. Public Hearing Items

A) Arcata Fire Protection District Annexation of Goodwill Response Area

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided an overview of the proposed annexation. The Arcata Fire Protection District (FPD) submitted an application for annexation of its goodwill response areas along Jacoby Creek Road and Fickle Hill Road. The District will be extending its approved special assessment and special tax to the area and pursuing a property tax sharing agreement with the County under master tax sharing offer #2. Two written comments were received on

the proposed annexation from property owners in the area. One letter of opposition was received along with one request for inclusion in the annexation area.

Arcata FPD staff was available and provided comment. The District attempts to recover costs from calls for service outside of the District boundary but billing can be difficult. They currently participate in auto-aid agreements with nearby agencies to provide services to the greater North Bay community. Largest issue in more rural areas is adequate access to water.

Commissioners held discussion regarding the proposed annexation. Clarification was provided on the different types of agreements including auto-aid, which means all agencies are notified at the time of dispatch, and mutual-aid, which means that the responding agency needs to request additional resources if needed. Commissioners also discussed the number of recent calls to the annexation area, how the boundary line was determined, and the current out of district cost for services.

Public comment was received from the following:

- Stayce Curry – requested additional information on wells and how they are accessed by the fire department.
- Robert Goodman – Supports the annexation to Arcata FPD but feels the boundary should be moved to include Nature Lane area since Arcata FPD can responded faster than Kneeland Fire. The boundary should follow the Jacoby Creek School District as to not divide an established community. He expressed concern about insurance companies considering whether a department is career vs. volunteer when establishing/renewing homeowners' coverage.

With no further public comment, the comment period was closed. Additional discussion was held by the Commissioners on homeowners coverage, onsite water storage, Firewise, and redundancy in response.

Motion Losey/Lake to adopt Resolution No. 24-02, approving a sphere of influence amendment and annexation of goodwill response areas to the Arcata Fire Protection District. Motion passed by 6-0-0 roll call vote.

B) Proposed Budget and Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2024-25

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report for the proposed budget which includes a small increase of 3% to member contributions. Cal Poly Humboldt purchased the Stewart School Building where the LAFCo office was located which has required the LAFCo offices to move. The new location has a higher cost so staff included an increase for the rent line item in the proposed budget. Staff has also included costs for web-based mapping including an ArcGIS account.

Commissioners held discussion regarding the proposed budget including current inflation rates, the efficient use of the budget by staff, and if other LAFCOs contribute to the office space cost. Executive Officer Santsche noted that Planwest Partners staffs Del Norte LAFCo which also contributes to the cost of rent.

The hearing was opened for public comment and no comment was received. Commissioner Madron left at 10:00am prior to the vote.

Motion Nicolini/Losey to adopt Resolution No. 24-03, approving the Proposed Budget for FY2024-25, and distribute it to the member agencies for comment. Motion passed by 5-0-0 roll call vote.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

A) Professional Services Contracts for Executive Officer and Legal Counsel

This business item was moved to take place after the scheduled public hearing items. Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided a brief overview of staffing services over the past several years. Both Planwest Partners and Mitchell Law Firm would like to continue providing services to Humboldt LAFCo. However, if the Commission can choose to release an RFP for services if they would like to.

Commissioners expressed their appreciation for the staffing services provided and would like to continue with both firms. Contracts are to be provided at the next Commission meeting for consideration. Commissioner Lee expressed appreciation for the regional staffing continuity that Planwest provides for Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity LAFCos.

Motion Losey/Lee to move forward with professional services contracts for Planwest Partners and Mitchell Law Firm. Motion passed by 5-0-0 voice vote.

8. INFORMATIONAL AND CONTINUING ITEMS

A) Status of Expiring Commissioner Terms

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided a brief summary of expiring commissioner terms in 2024. The City Selection Committee will be convened in July. The Special District call for nominations was sent out but no nominations have been received to date. Staff may need to extend the nomination period if no nominations are received. The Regular Public Member seat will be expiring and staff will be sending out the notice of upcoming vacancy this month.

B) Status Municipal Service Review Preparations

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided an overview of current MSR preparations. Staff has been coordinating with LACO Associates and Orick CSD on MSR preparation. The administrative draft will be provided to the District for review and comment prior to being made public at the next Commission meeting. Staff has also been working on initial data collection and analysis for Orleans CSD and the City of Eureka.

Commissioners held discussion on current MSRs including opportunities to consult with tribes in the area and whether Orick CSD may be able to take on levee maintenance. While this is a power that could be activated for the District, it would require additional planning and secure funding sources.

C) Status of Current and Future Proposals

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided a brief summary of current applications. There is currently only one active application for the Arcata FPD annexation. Next steps for this application include conducting a protest hearing which has been delegated to the Executive Officer. Humboldt CSD is still working on

their annexation application package and recently took it to their Board for review. They would like to negotiate for a portion the property tax increment of growth in assessed value and will be reaching out the County. Kneeland FPD is also working on their annexation application package but need to first adjust their special tax by providing a contiguous parcel exemption.

Commissioners held discussion on current applications and expressed gratitude for Measure Z funding. It is the hope that this funding can continue so LAFCo and the county can continue their work on fire services. It was also noted that having a comprehensive water services report, similar to the annual fire services report, would provide useful information.

D) LAFCo Boundary Change Process

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided an overview of the Humboldt LAFCos policies and procedures for boundary changes and other changes of organization. LAFCo encourages agencies to submit applications by resolution but they can also be submitted by petition. Staff would like to work on pulling together an annexation policy template to help agencies effectively navigate the annexation process.

E) LAFCo Meeting Procedures

Executive Officer Stansche introduced the staff report and provided an overview of Robert's Rules of Order and LAFCo policy regarding meeting conduct. Chair Bushnell added that she would like Commissioners to wait to be called on when providing comments and not interrupt others while they are providing comments.

9. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

A) CALAFCO Quarterly Newsletter

B) CALAFCO Daily Legislative Report (March 2024)

C) Form 700 (due April 1st)

D) Ethics and Sexual Harassment Training

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report. She requested that Form 700s be provided by April 1st. It was also requested that the May meeting be moved to the following week as staff will be out of the office. Commissioners requested that staff provide updated calendar invitations once the meeting is scheduled.

10. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE - None

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37am. The next meeting of the Commission will take place on a day and time to be determined at the City of Eureka Council Chambers located at 531 K Street, Eureka, CA 95501.