

**-ADOPTED-**

**JULY 20, 2022  
MEETING MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom video conference with Chair Bass presiding.

**2. FLAG SALUTE**

**3. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Stephen Avis, Virginia Bass, Michelle Bushnell, Debra Lake\*, Ali Lee, and Mike Losey  
Members Absent: Troy Nicolini  
Alternates Present: David Couch\*\*, Gordon Johnson, and Skip Jorgensen  
Alternates Absent: Mike Wilson  
Staff: Colette Santsche, Executive Officer  
Krystle Heaney, Clerk  
Ryan Plotz, Attorney

\*Commissioner Lake joined the meeting at 10:35am

\*\*Seated as voting member

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT – None**

**5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A) AB 361 for Continued Remote Meetings**

**B) Approval of May 18, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes**

No discussion was held regarding the consent calendar.

**Motion Avis/Couch** to approve the consent calendar including adoption of Resolution 22-08 for continuation of remote meetings. Motion passed by 6-0-0 roll call vote.

**6. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**A) Hybrid Meeting Options for LAFCo Meetings**

Executive Officer Santsche provided an overview of hybrid meeting options including the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors chambers, Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District Board Room, and City of Eureka Council Room. Clarification was provided that the County owns all of the hybrid meeting equipment and not Access Humboldt. Direction was given to staff to reach out to the County again about running a hybrid meeting and report back with more information.

**Motion Losey/ Avis** to receive and file staff report and continue working on hybrid meeting options. Motion passed by 6-0-0 roll call vote.

## **7. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

### **A) Proposed Formation of the Salmon Creek Fire Protection District**

Chair Bass opened the public hearing. Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided background on the formation process. The proposed formation will be dependent on voter approval of a special tax to support the district which will include an inflationary adjustment and a contiguous parcel exemption for property owners that own two or more adjacent undeveloped parcels. The formation also includes master tax sharing agreement offer No. 5 with Humboldt County which will provide additional revenue to the proposed fire protection district. The proposed district boundary overlaps slightly with Miranda CSD goodwill response area but this will be adjusted during Miranda CSD's next SOI update. Upon approval by the Commission, a protest hearing will be held in Salmon Creek to confirm the formation.

Discussion was opened up to commissioners for comment. Discussion was held on the necessity of the special tax for formation and clarification as to why offer No. 5 was chosen over some of the other offers in the master tax sharing agreement. It was also noted that special tax exemption guidelines will be finalized by the proposed district Board of Directors in an adopted ordinance.

Chair Bass asked for public comment. Chief Gribi commented on the current status of the Salmon Creek volunteer fire company including funding gaps and the need for updated fire equipment and a fire station in the area. Upon formation of the proposed District, they will continue to operate the volunteer company and fundraise to provide additional funding for fire and emergency response services. Additional comments were received from public participants in support of formation.

Additional information was provided on how emergency personnel are contacted and what level of involvement is received from CAL FIRE since the area is within the State Responsibility Area. Commissioner Bushnell commented that the community is very supportive of the proposed district formation and that it is vital to the safety of the area.

**Motion Couch/ Bushnell** to adopt Resolution 22-09 approving the formation of the Salmon Creek Fire Protection District and delegating protest proceedings to the Executive Officer. Motion passed by 6-0-0 roll call vote.

### **B) Proposed Annexation of Good Will Response Area and Land Currently Served by the Sprowel Creek Volunteer Fire Company to the Garberville Fire Protection District**

Chair Bass opened the public hearing and requested a report from staff. Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided background on the annexation process. The proposed annexation includes the Sprowel Creek Volunteer Fire Company response area and the historical Goodwill Response Area of the Garberville FPD. The proposed annexation would be funded by a special tax levied within the existing district and proposed annexation area, and a property tax exchange agreement No. 1 with Humboldt County.

Discussion was opened up to commissioners for comment. Discussion was held on how the increased revenue would help sustain the District. The additional funding would help fund critical service improvements and support the construction of a new fire station in the Benbow area. Clarification was provided that current CAL FIRE

responsibility is limited to wildland fires, however, they will respond to other incidents if crews are available.

Chair Bass asked for public comment. Chief Tietz stated that the increase of cost to provide service is becoming a burden for the District and the proposed annexation would help alleviate that financial strain. Additional comments were provided from the public, including Craig from Alpenglow Farms and Shawn Masterson, stating that the local Benbow community has been working on Firewise certification and obtaining grants to assist with safety, that annexation would help area residents obtain fire insurance, and overall support for the annexation to help support the District and continue to build up crews. John Porter, owner of the Benbow Inn, KOA and gold course, provided full support for the annexation and the local Benbow fire safety efforts.

Commissioner Lee noted that the annexation creates more resiliency for the local community and stable funding for the department. Commissioner Bushnell provided thanks for the collaborative work of everyone over that last few years and requested that the proposed motion be amended to waive protest proceedings and approve the proposed annexation.

**Motion Lee/ Losey** to adopt Resolution No. 22-10 approving the annexation of lands to the Garberville Fire Protection District and waiving protest proceedings. Motion passed by 6-0-0 roll call vote.

## **8. INFORMATIONAL AND CONTINUING ITEMS**

### **A) Status of Expiring Commissioner Terms**

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the staff report and provided an overview of staff efforts to fill Commission vacancies. The City selection committee will be meeting sometime in late July or early August to appoint new members. The Special District election had to be extended since a quorum was not reached during the scheduled voting period. The voting period has now been extended to August 26, 2022. Staff will continue to send out reminders and will inform commissioners of results when a quorum is reached. To date, no applications have been received for the alternate public member seat.

### **B) Status of MSR Preparations**

Clerk Heaney introduced the staff report and provided an update on current MSR efforts. Staff is continuing to gather information for the South County MSR and work with districts on obtaining primary contacts. The MSR is scheduled for public hearing in the fall.

### **C) Status of Current and Future Proposals**

Executive Officer Santsche presented the staff report for Current and Future Proposals. This included a summary of next steps for the Salmon Creek FPD formation and Garberville FPD annexation. Staff is continuing to work on fire services coordination throughout the county to help provide more efficient services for residents and provide long-term financial support for fire and emergency response services.

Staff is also working with Willow Creek CSD on activation of wastewater services in advance of their new system coming online. Other future applications are currently on hold.

Commissioner Lee reported on the previous Creekside annexation for the City of Arcata. The property was recently sold to Cal Poly Humboldt and will likely no longer be utilized for senior housing development as was originally proposed. While the Commission does not have land use authority, it considers land uses and service needs when deciding to approve or disapprove an annexation or other extension of services.

Commissioner Lake joined the meeting at approximately 10:35 a.m.

## **9. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

### **A) CALAFCO Annual Conference Announcement and Mobile Workshop Flyer (October 19-21, 2022)**

### **B) CALAFCO Achievement Award Nominations**

### **C) CALAFCO Board Recruitment and Nominations**

### **D) CALAFCO Quarterly (May 2022)**

### **E) CALAFCO Board of Directors Meeting (July 22, 2022)**

### **F) CALAFCO Daily Legislative Report (July 2022)**

Executive Officer Santsche introduced the attachments included as part of the Executive Officers Report. The annual CALAFCO conference is schedule for October. This is the first one to be held since 2019. Commissioners Bushnell, Bass, and Lake will be attending on behalf of Humboldt LAFCo. Additional discussion was held on potential virtual attendance options and annual achievement award nominations. It was also noted that there are seats open on the CALAFCO board and there have been recent changes to protest proceedings which will be reflected in the next CKH Act update.

## **10. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE**

None

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m. The next regular meeting of the Commission will be held on Wednesday, September 21, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom webinar.