

MINUTES



County of Inyo Board of Supervisors

April 19, 2022

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Inyo, State of California, met in regular session at the hour of 11:32 a.m., on April 19, 2022 outside of the Town Hall at the Ranch at the Oasis in Furnace Creek, CA, with the following Supervisors present: Chairperson Dan Tothoroh, presiding, Jeff Griffiths, Rick Pucci, Matt Kingsley, and Jennifer Roeser. Also present: County Administrator Leslie Chapman, Assistant Clerk of the Board Darcy Ellis, and County Counsel John-Carl Vallejo.

*Tour of Ranch at
Death Valley*

Chairperson Tothoroh convened the meeting in open session in the lobby of the Ranch at Death Valley (California 190, Death Valley, CA) for a tour of Xanterra's recently remodeled facilities. Ranch General Manager John Kukreja led the tour, which was also attended by Public Works Director Mike Errante, Deputy Public Works Director John Pinckney, Child Support Services Director Amy Weurdig, Emergency Services Manager Mikaela Torres, Chief Probation Officer Jeff Thomson, Probation Officer Jorge Alvarado, and members of the public.

Recess/Reconvene

The Chairperson recessed the meeting at 12:15 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 1:43 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Furnace Creek Visitors Center, with all Board members present.

Workshop

The Board held a workshop in which they heard program and project updates, as well as information on visitor numbers and revenue from the following:

- Temporary Death Valley Superintendent James Woolsey and Management Analyst Abby Wines;
- Henry Golas of the Death Valley Conservancy;
- Fred Conboy, President of Amargosa Opera House, Inc., and Ramon Caballero, Vice President;
- John Kukreja, General Manager of the Ranch/Oasis at Death Valley; and
- Cal Rossi, Government Relations Manager for Southern California Edison

Recess/Reconvene

The Chairperson recessed the meeting at 2:59 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 4:32 p.m. in the Hurlbut-Rook Community Center in Tecopa, CA, with all Board members present (although Supervisor Griffiths would have to leave the meeting at 5:54 p.m. in order to attend a conference in Sacramento).

Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Kingsley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Chairperson Tothoroh asked for public comment on items not calendared on the agenda.

Supervisor Kingsley greeted and welcomed all those in attendance, expressing his gratitude that the whole Board is able to meet in Tecopa.

Additional comment was made by Larry Levy, asking if the Board has ever heard of carpooling and urging the County to continue pressuring the Barstow BLM regarding off-highway signage; Roger Hickman, who renewed a request from 2018 that Bob White Way be repaired; Patrick Donnelly, suggesting the BLM will have to do mitigation for the damage likely to come as a result of paving the road to Dumont Dunes and thus attracting more visitors; Supervisor Kingsley responding that he has tried in vain to get more engagement from the Barstow BLM office, representatives of which declined to attend to today's meeting; Cynthia Kienitz, who noted road jurisdiction issues her business is having (and distributed written materials to the Board); Steve McNeal, reporting that he will be putting a fire department in Charleston View, but the roads will need signs; and Wes McNeal, noting the responsible off-road community is a big boost to the local community.

County Department Reports

Department reports were heard from Veterans Service Officer Gordon Greene with an update on total claims; Chief Probation Officer Jeff Thomson introducing Probation Officer Jorge Alvarado, who will be a frequent visitor to the Southeast County; HHS Director Marilyn Mann with an update on the Continuum of Care; and Child Support Director Amy Weurdig inviting residents to attend Wednesday’s Regional Oversight meeting and to reach out with any questions about child support programs.

Presentations/ Updates

The following individuals addressed the Board:

- Death Valley Unified School District Superintendent Jim Copeland with a report on the school district;
- Robin Flinchum, reporting on the Tecopa Water Kiosk and Southern Inyo Fire Protection District;
- Christopher Sellers of Tecopa Hot Springs Conservancy, the concessionaire of Tecopa Hot Springs Campground, with an update on the campground;
- Cal Rossi, Southern California Edison Government Relations Manager, with an update on SCE services and projects
- Inyo County Public Works Director Mike Errante, reporting on the Tecopa Sewer Lagoon;
- Deputy Public Works Director John Pinckney, with additional information on rights-of-way issues and a Federal Lands Access Program grant to make repairs on Stateline Road; and
- Inyo-Mono Ag Commissioner Nate Reade, with an update on commercial cannabis activities in Southeast Inyo – both legal and illegal.

CAO – Greg James Contract Amendment 11

Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Roeser to approve Amendment No. 11 to the contract between Gregory L. James, Water/Environmental Attorney Regarding Natural Resources, and the County of Inyo by extending the term of the contract from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2023, contingent upon the Board's adoption of the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget, and authorize the County Administrator to sign. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

Public Works – SealMaster Sole-Source Purchase

Moved by Supervisor Kingsley and seconded by Supervisor Roeser to: A) declare SealMaster of Bakersfield, CA the successful bidder for mastic material and kettle rental per Bid No. RD22-01; and B) authorize the purchase of two (2) truck loads of mastic material and six (6) months' rental of an appropriate kettle from SealMaster for an amount not to exceed \$94,259.70. Motion carried unanimously 4-0, with Supervisor Griffiths absent.

Public Comment

Chairperson Totheroh asked for public comment on items not calendared on the agenda.

Public comment was made by Patrick Donnelly, who praised Robin Flinchum for holding the community together, urged the Board to find the \$3,000 a year needed to keep the Tecopa Water Kiosk in operation, and thanking the Board for starting to engage with Nevada regarding Amargosa Basin overdraft issues; and from Susan Sorrells, who gave an update on the Amargosa Conservancy’s efforts to have lands designated a National Monument and distributed written materials to the Board.

Board Member and Staff Reports

The Chairperson opened the floor to Board and Staff reports and there were none.

Adjournment

Chairperson Totheroh adjourned the meeting at 6:29 p.m., to 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 26, 2022 in the Board Chambers of the County Administrative Center, Independence, CA.

*Attest: LESLIE L. CHAPMAN
Clerk of the Board*

*by: _____
Darcy Ellis, Assistant*