

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Round Valley Area Municipal Advisory Council (RVAMAC)

Held Wednesday March 4, 2020

at the Library Commons, 23925 Howard Street, Covelo, CA

The meeting was called to order by Presiding Officer Jessica Stull-Otto at 6:05 p.m.

1. The meeting was attended by the following persons:

Council members

Lew Chichester, Charles Sargenti, Dane Downing, Kathy Britton, Jessica Stull-Otto, Laura Betts

Officials

John Haschak, 5th District Supervisor, Paloma Patterson, Community Foundation, James Sookne, MCOG, Nephela Barrett, MCOG

General Public

John Marshall, Dee Mullen, Imil Ferrara, Mary Jane Cummings, Pat Sobrero, Susan O'Brien, Kay Richards, George Helmholtz, Jessica Harness, David Vallero, Russ Segure

2. Approval of current Agenda and minutes from February 5, 2020

The Agenda was approved by consensus. Dane Downing presented a permit undergoing review by the Building Dept. which was sent to the Council for input. To allow consideration of such items in the future a standing agenda item for that purpose was proposed and agreed to by the Presiding Officer. The minutes for February were approved with minor corrections suggested by Dane.

3. John Haschak made several announcements. The county is declaring a state of emergency regarding Covid-19 at a news conference on March 5. The North Bay Broadband Consortium is working on a grant proposal to provide fiber optic broadband cable from Hopland to Covelo and other areas in the county. Assemblyman Jim Wood would like to attend a Farmer's Market in May. John is seeking applicants from Covelo for a 3 year, \$1000 per year scholarship he sponsors covering several areas in the 3rd District for high school seniors going into some form of public service.

4. Nephela Barrett discussed a Fire Vulnerability Assessment for the valley. A draft assessment is slated to be available later this month and an evacuation plan in May.

5. Nephela Barrett and James Sookne provided a detailed update on the bike path. Best case construction will start late summer, but more likely late spring or early summer of next year.

6. Paloma Patterson gave a presentation on the upcoming census. The census website (www.2020census.org) will go live March 12 and mailings will be going out starting around March 16. There is no app but the website is supposed to be mobile friendly. The official end of the census is July 31.

7. The letter to California Department of Business Oversight protesting the possible closure of the local TriCounties Bank was sent. Dane reported that the offices of State Senator McGuire stated that the application to close the branch has not been withdrawn but has been put on hold pending discussions between the bank and the building owner.

8. Several working groups reported. Community Outreach reported that Mary Lou will be sending out the postcards. Fire/Disaster Preparedness provided the latest draft of the pamphlet and will next be working on identifying community resources and areas of deficiency of same. Economic

Development provided a recap of matters discussed at the working group meeting the previous Saturday (see summary appended).

9. Jessica and Dane are working on a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) regarding use of CCSD space for the storage of records of the MAC.

10. Regarding Agenda items 11., b. c. and d. , these were postponed to the next meeting, where draft bylaws developed by Charles and Dane would be presented, and an opinion of county counsel obtained regarding same.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.

Appendix

Round Valley Area Municipal Advisory Council Economic Development Committee 2-29-20

Town's Business Development

Discussed the loss of another commercial building in town just the night before the meeting & questioned if it will be rebuilt. Discussed possible impediments to rebuilding such as new codes that would be imposed to old buildings which were previously exempt from such codes.

Parcel map was discussed again as a way to get a cohesive town plan envisioned to better create a viable business hub. This map could identify businesses lost/removed/available/proposed/etc.

If building codes/permits are prohibiting the rebuilding of lost businesses, the MAC could develop its own support letter in encouraging some exemptions from the permitting process.

The issues of empty lots in the commercial zone and abandoned cars were discussed in how to best resolve them.

Identifying "eyesore" locations and/or areas was discussed to determine ways to best improve the perception of the town's business viability.

Library References

Discussed the MAC's library reference section and thought it important to include the County General Plan, the MCOG Plan, the Round Valley Community Action Plans. Dane agreed to research and locate the two Community Action Plans that he has seen; one from the 70's and one from the late 90's.

Bank Closure

Discussion around varying efforts to contact the State Dept of Business Oversight (DBO) as well as Tri Counties Bank itself were detailed. It's understood that the DBO requested Tri Counties to withdraw its petition and wait until a formal letter of eviction is received.

Questions as to the MAC's DBO letter were raised as to it being sent.

Discussion re: the prospective owner does not have the authority to change any leases before ownership and therefore their actions were seen to have negative connotations. Public records only state the current legal owner of a parcel thus the name and contact information of the prospective owner is not currently available in order to confirm their intentions.

Cannabis

The large proposed development at the business park has been withdrawn.

There're possibility two more dispensaries being proposed.

Legal production must be organic and certified as such. Secondary issues with this certification

include residues from trash burning, adjacent property's chemical use, etc. These residues become an issue when material is transformed into concentrate. The 80% to 90% CBD/THC concentration from 10% or so also concentrates any residues.

Legal markets for cannabis currently are selling at \$800 to \$1000 per pound.

There are distributors that can pick it up from the valley to be processed in Willits.

Recreation/Forestry

Discussed when increasing the watershed's health, the health of the community improves relationally.

Dam removal was discussed to improve water flows and overall watershed health.

Forest Reciprocity Group (FRG)

The presentation at the Feb MAC meeting highlighted the need for local training in the various aspects of building homes as well as training in the various aspects of forestry work.

The development of actual lesson plans is needed to adequately teach such skills.

Discussed Mendocino College grants as well as Tribes Educational grants as possible local occupational training options.

Occupational Training

The need for hands-on, relevant job training was identified and a key need to create employable persons in the valley. Need areas of training identified include: Fire and emergency services, agriculture, solar electric, construction, fire fuels management, administrative services, home health services, Tribal government, general business.

The New Paradigm College in Lucerne, CA was discussed as to their focus on employment training and career training courses and workshops.

A survey was proposed to be drafted to better assess the community's actual needs re: training. This survey could then be distributed at events in the Valley to gather greater community input. Given the top priorities identified then funding and educational channels could be explored and created.

North Coast Opportunities has solicited a grant for fire resiliency projects, though its due date being within two weeks makes it unlikely to be a fit for the MAC. TANIF job placement and training services provided by the Tribes was discussed to coordinate future job trainings and workshops.

Discussed the differences between Occupation and Career and how the two mutually support one another and how these distinctions guide one to the appropriate type of training.

Micro Grid Power Generation

Discussed the need for small household and small business units though repeated efforts to contact the manufacturer have not been reciprocated. The need was identified and the details are not yet fully known.

Procedure/Input

Discussed how best to report this subcommittee's discussions and how best to garner input from the MAC and the community at large. It was suggested that the report just be read and in the interest of time to choose only a topic or two for input.

This month's input is requested for "developing a form to assess the community's need for businesses".