

# State of California, County of Siskiyou

## Board of Supervisors Minutes, September 29, 2020

The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Siskiyou County, California, met in special session this 29<sup>th</sup> day of September 2020; there being present Supervisors Brandon Criss, Michael N. Kobseff, Ray A. Haupt, Lisa L. Nixon and Ed Valenzuela, County Administrator Angela Davis, County Counsel Edward J. Kiernan, and County Clerk and ex-Officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Laura Bynum by Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winningham. All board members in the room and present.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kobseff. Supervisor Nixon led in the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

### **Presentations from the Public**

County resident Steve Radford spoke in support of the Office of Sheriff being a Constitutional position.

In response to Chair Kobseff, Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winningham advised that the Clerk's Office received one email regarding the appointment process for the position of Sheriff from County resident Lucy Love.

Pursuant to California Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20, March 17, 2020, various members of the public participated in presentations from the public via ZOOM/teleconference phone.

Commenter Jennifer Dickinson shared concerns regarding the anticipated appointment process to fill the vacant position of Sheriff, speaking in support of appointing an Interim Sheriff until a special election for the position can be held versus appointing a Sheriff for the remaining term.

**County Administration/Board of Supervisors** - Discussion, direction and possible action to conduct oral interviews for the position of Sheriff-Coroner, consider offering one of the candidates appointment to fill the Sheriff-Coroner vacancy, contingent upon the candidate's satisfactory completion of a background investigation, and consider taking other appropriate action.

County Administrator Angela Davis provided a brief overview of the anticipated process for interviewing candidates for the vacant position of Sheriff, including the six standard questions to be asked, the Board members' rating/ranking process and the process for the Board to discuss and possibly offer a candidate the appointment to fill the position, conditioned on satisfactory completion of a background investigation.

County Counsel Edward J. Kiernan summarized Government Code Section 25304 which mandates that the Board of Supervisors appoint to fill a vacancy for an elected position. In addition, Mr. Kiernan advised that the Attorney General, pursuant to Opinion No. 15-1202, concluded that the Board of Supervisors is mandated to timely appoint to fill the position rather than conduct a special election.

Brief discussion followed between members of the Board and Mr. Kiernan to provide clarification regarding the inability of the Board to revoke the appointment to fill the vacant position, that the Board was not proposing to change the position of Sheriff from an elected position to an appointed position and the manner in which the position would be treated, similar to other elected officials, with regard to the potential for recall.

Ms. Davis and Personnel Manager Melissa Cummins drew individual candidates' names to create the interview schedule as follows: Candidate Jeff Huston, Candidate Parrish Cross, Candidate Jeremiah Larue, Candidate Karl Houtman and Candidate Mark Melville.

Chair Kobseff advised that each candidate was allocated 45 minutes to answer the six recommended questions and any additional questions from each Board member. Chair Kobseff suggested, although not mandatory, that the candidates excuse themselves from the Board Chambers during the individual interviews.

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## **County Administration/Board of Supervisors – (continued)**

Candidate Jeff Huston was interviewed and answered questions from the Board regarding anticipated management philosophy, budget administration/management, Jail/Corrections experience, illegal cannabis issues in the County, working relationships with various entities (i.e. Elected Officials, County Administrator, City/State/Federal representatives/agencies, Law Enforcement). Furthermore, Mr. Huston answered additional questions from each member of the Board and provided a closing statement.

Candidate Parrish Cross was interviewed and answered questions from the Board regarding anticipated management philosophy, budget administration/management, Jail/Corrections experience, illegal cannabis issues in the County, working relationships with various entities (i.e. Elected Officials, County Administrator, City/State/Federal representatives/agencies, Law Enforcement). Furthermore, Mr. Cross answered additional questions from each member of the Board and provided a closing statement.

Candidate Jeremiah Larue was interviewed and answered questions from the Board regarding anticipated management philosophy, budget administration/management, Jail/Corrections experience, illegal cannabis issues in the County, working relationships with various entities (i.e. Elected Officials, County Administrator, City/State/Federal representatives/agencies, Law Enforcement). Furthermore, Mr. Larue answered additional questions from each member of the Board and provided a closing statement.

Following the lunch recess, Candidate Karl Houtman was interviewed and answered questions from the Board regarding anticipated management philosophy, budget administration/management, Jail/Corrections experience, illegal cannabis issues in the County, working relationships with various entities (i.e. Elected Officials, County Administrator, City/State/Federal representatives/agencies, Law Enforcement). Furthermore, Mr. Houtman answered additional questions from each member of the Board and provided a closing statement.

Candidate Mark Melville was interviewed and answered questions from the Board regarding anticipated management philosophy, budget administration/management, Jail/Corrections experience, illegal cannabis issues in the County, working relationships with various entities (i.e. Elected Officials, County Administrator, City/State/Federal representatives/agencies, Law Enforcement). Furthermore, Mr. Houtman answered additional questions from each member of the Board and provided a closing statement.

In response to Chair Kobseff, Ms. Davis summarized the anticipated process for members of the Board to rank the candidates and to announce the results.

Following discussion between members of the Board regarding their role in the selection/appointment process and the rating/ranking process, members of the Board made their selections. Once the ranking forms were collected, Ms. Davis announced the final candidate ranking for each Supervisorial District as follows: District 1 – Jeremiah Larue; District 2 – Jeremiah Larue; District 3 – Jeremiah Larue; District 4 – Jeremiah Larue and Jeff Huston; and District 5 – Jeremiah Laure.

It was moved by Supervisor Valenzuela and seconded by Supervisor Criss to offer Jeremiah Larue the appointment to fill the Sheriff-Coroner vacancy, conditioned on his satisfactory completion of a background investigation conducted by the County Administrator and reviewed by the Board (with the findings to be reported to the Board). Following a roll call vote with Supervisors Criss, Haupt, Valenzuela, Nixon and Kobseff voting YES, the motion carried unanimously.

**Closed Session** - Conference with legal counsel, existing litigation pursuant to Government Code §54956.9(a), name of case: McMillan, et al, v. County of Siskiyou, California Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District, Case No. C087960, commenced at 2:45p.m., concluded at 2:54p.m., with no action taken.

### **Report On Closed Session**

County Counsel Edward J. Kiernan announced that closed session concluded at 2:54p.m., with no reportable action taken.

**Adjournment** - There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, the meeting was adjourned.

Attest:  
Laura Bynum, County Clerk

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Michael N. Kobseff, Chair

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

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