

Report to Directors, Angwin Community Council

Subject: Board of Supervisors meeting, February 10, 2009

From: Herb Ford

Today's BOS meeting was something of a one item meeting during the morning hours. Shortly after the session began at 9 a.m., the Board went in to a closed meeting, so the public twiddled its thumbs for a time. During that time I had a delightful conversation with Jillian Jones, the government reporter for The Napa Register, about the downturn in circulation and advertising for most of the nation's newspapers; Time magazine having a cover story on the subject in its current issue. Board Chair Mark Luce had to excuse himself from the meeting at about 10 a.m. for a doctor's appointment. Vice Chair Diane Dillon took charge of the session in his place.

The almost all-morning-taking item included a presentation to the Board by the California Water Service Company, a firm the Board is looking at in terms of possibly privatizing the water and waste systems of those living in Berryessa Estates, Berryessa Highlands, etc. It was an excellent presentation with some real problem-solving aspects to the possibility. But at the same time the good people out at the lake have invested in what they have expected will be a system upgrade, and many of them are wondering how what they've already done and plan to do would work into a privatizing plan. And, too, they're whether their costs for water service would increase under private ownership over the very high cost they're already paying. Today was simply given over to hearing what the private water company was, is, and hopes to be. Cal Water currently serves over 20 communities and cities in California, and others in New Mexico, Washington and Hawaii. They are the third largest publicly traded water utility in the United States, and the largest in the Western U.S.

Before he left the meeting, Chair Luce nominated Michael Basayne from a list of three applicants to the Conservation, Development and Planning Commission of the County. In other appointments, James Henry and Thomas Nelson were reappointed (from a list of four) to the County's Airport Advisory Commission, their terms expiring on December 31, 2011.

The possibility of a landfill in Colusa County on the Cortina Rancheria has been strenuously opposed by that county, and today the BOS voted a resolution supporting Colusa in its landfill fight. I have not been able to obtain the particulars relative to this matter.

A loan of \$800,000 from the county's Affordable Housing Fund was voted by the Board today. The loan is to Napa Valley Community Housing to assist in the construction of 36 units of affordable housing in Yountville. The loan is at 3.5% for what I thought I heard was 75 years.

Other items considered by the Board today included a request for approval of the 2008-2009 Citizen's Option for Public Safety expenditure plan; the signing of a Letter of Promulgation for the Health and Human Services' plans to respond "promptly and effectively, in

coordination with the County's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to medical and health-related emergencies or disasters and the corresponding mass care and shelter of the community."

Also considered today: A report from the County's actuarial consultant John Bartel, concerning projected CalPERS employee contribution rates towards retirement benefits, and suggested alternatives which may help to mitigate assumed increases due to the volatility of the world's financial markets; and "A status report on the County's fiscal condition, as of the end of the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2008-09; and the revision and continuation of certain short-term actions called for in the Board's Fiscal Contingency Plan through March 31, 2009."

While waiting for the Board to begin its 9 a.m., session this morning I picked up a piece of literature advertising "The 2009 Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearings, to be held on Tuesday, March 17, at the State Board of Equalization, 450 N Street, 1st Floor Board Room in Sacramento, and on Tuesday, April 28, at the State Board of Equalization, 5901 Green Valley Circle, Suite 207, in Culver City, Calif. (that's down South).

Each of the hearings are to begin at 1:30 p.m. A simple but attractive brochure picked up informs me that the American Red Cross (ARC) has been serving Napa County for 91 years. The ARC's business office is at 1790 Third Street in Napa, and their Volunteer and Development Center is at 1474 Oak Street in St. Helena.

A paper from the Watershed Coalition provided me with a new word I hadn't heard before - "exceedance" - as in, "Winter 2007-2008 Storm Runoff Shows Few Exceedances," or as in "Pesticide exceedances were found in 13 of the samples taken in the four storms . . ." Another addition to growing arsenal of gobbledegook methinks.

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