

Report to Directors, Angwin Community Council

Subject: Napa County Board of Supervisors meeting, May 12, 2009.

From: Herbert Ford

A proclamation declaring May 17-23 as “Emergency Medical Services Week” in Napa County was read out by BOS Chair Mark Luce at the outset of today’s meeting. Six “Whereases” lauding the EMS teams of Napa County led to “Now, therefore, I, Mark Luce, Chair of the Napa County BOS, do hereby proclaim the week of May 17th through May 23rd, 2009, as *Emergency Medical Services Week*, and encourage the community to observe this week by participating in appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.”

The review and proposed approval of minutes of the BOS meetings of April 6, 7, and 14, 2009, drew a request for some change from District Three Supervisor Dillon. Whether, in the flurry of words that ensued thereafter, I could not state with any degree of certainty that approval was given to these minutes. Because of the extended, non-break hearing that followed shortly thereafter there was no opportunity to approach the Clerk of the Board to check whether or not approval had been given.

Consent Items on today’s agenda included a mind-boggling 55-page spell-out of a Total Tentative Agreement (TTA) for a new collective bargaining agreement between the County and the Deputy Sheriffs’ Association Law Enforcement Unit and Law Enforcement Supervisory Unit. I guess labor union agreements are always minute in detail, but this one seemed to dot more I’s and cross more T’s than seems reasonable. Talk about concerning oneself with the southwest quadrant of the left half of small toenail and this document seems to do even better (or is it worse) than that. Good or bad, the Board passed “a resolution approving the Memoranda of Understanding with the sheriffs units along with 16 other Consent Items.

At shortly after 9 a.m., the BOS heard a request from the Director of Public Works to adopt a resolution amending or establishing certain Agricultural Preserves (Types “A” & “H”), which included authorization for the BOS Chair to execute a number of Williamson Act contracts. Included were contracts in the location of Chiles Pope Valley Road and Pope Canyon Road; near Silverado Trail and Dunaweal Lane, and near Yount Mill Road. This matted zipped right through the hearing process.

A 9:30 public hearing to consider and possibly take action on an appeal filed by Ms. Carol Vendrillo regarding a decision by the Director of Public Works concerning a lot line adjustment filed by Calness Vintners about property located on Finnell Road in the easterly part of Yountville took up practically all the rest of the BOS’s morning session. The arguments in this matter brought out the Sierra Club representative, and, of course, lawyers on both sides of the appeal. The matter was a clear demonstration to this observer of people laboring under the weight of too many State and County rules and regulations, practically all of which can have differing interpretations, the winning interpretation seeming to always go to the most silver-tongued attorney. There was one such at the hearing, and by dent of considerable previous

experience appearing before the BOS, he won. The matter gave opportunity for some BOS chest beating relative to “the protection of agriculture.” One hears far more than enough from Board members of the stand-up-tall, strong affirmation that “we must protect agriculture,” especially since everyone knows that the taking of any other course would be a certain death wish by the Supervisor taking it.

From the lot line adjustment appeal, the BOS went directly to the first reading and intent to adopt an ordinance making changes to the County Code pertaining to lot line adjustments. This gave additional opportunity for complexifying the rules relating to this always contentious matter. In due course the changes will be made through the adoption of this new ordinance, and with its adoption will come opportunity, time and again, for lawyers to wax eloquent and enrich themselves trying to get the BOS to adopt their interpretations of the various paragraphs and sub-paragraphs of the new ordinance.

The “simplification” and updating of user fees in the County Policy Manual, and a special meeting of the In-Home Supportive Services of the County were taken up in the afternoon sessions of the Board.

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