

# COUNTY OF NEVADA

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Supervisor Heidi Hall, District I  
Supervisor Ed Scofield, District II  
Chair Dan Miller, District III  
Vice Chair Susan Hoek, District IV  
Supervisor Hardy Bullock, District V

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Julie Patterson Hunter, Clerk of the Board  
Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer  
Katharine L. Elliott, County Counsel



## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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### SUMMARY MINUTES - Draft

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Thursday, January 28, 2021	9:00 AM	Remote Meeting Eric Rood Administrative Center 950 Maidu Avenue Nevada City, California

### BOARD WORKSHOP

#### Special Meeting: Estimated 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Rollcall. The following Supervisors present:

Heidi Hall, 1st District  
Ed Scofield, 2nd District  
Dan Miller, 3rd District  
Sue Hoek, 4th District  
Hardy Bullock, 5th District

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#### STANDING ORDERS:

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was held.

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#### County Executive Officer: Alison Lehman

I. [SR 21-0069](#) Welcome, Introductions, and Review of Agenda

Introductions were made.

Ms. Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer, welcomed the Board to their 2021 Workshop.

Ms. Lori Burkhart Frank, Facilitator, reviewed the flow of the agenda for the day. She led the Board through a warm-up group activity prior to start of the agenda, and together the Board members formulated expectations and guidelines for the two days of their Workshop.

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**Public Comment:**

[SR 21-0111](#)

The following members of the public provided written comment: Ms. Ana Acton, Executive Director, FREED; Ms. Jamie Jones, Executive Director, Fire Safe Council of Nevada County; Mr. Robert Long, District 3 resident; Mr. Mark Schaefer, District 4 resident; Ms. Sarah Smale, District 4 resident; Ms. Diana Gamzon, Executive Director, Cannabis Alliance of Nevada County. Mr. Mike Ingram, District 4 resident; Ms. Patricia Rockwell, District 4 resident; Ms. Susan Rogers, District 3 resident; and Mr. Hank Weston, District 4 resident.

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**County Executive Officer: Alison Lehman**

II. [SR 21-0041](#)

County Overview

- County Executive Officer Update
- 2020 BOS Objectives in Review: Board Discussion - Transitioning to 2021
- Financial Update Presentation

**County Executive Officer Update:**

Ms. Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer, provided an overview of her roadmap for the upcoming year, focusing on improvements to the County's Human Resources processes, including implementation of flex schedules and telework; results of the Citizen Survey; expansion of performance measures using the County's ClearPoint software program; and improvements to the Community Development Agency's customer experience.

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**2020 BOS Objectives in Review: Board Discussion - Transitioning to 2021:**

Ms. Mali LaGoe, Assistant County Executive Officer, provided an overview of the Board's 2020 objectives; Financial Stability/Core Services; Wildfire preparedness and Public Safety Power Shutdown (PSPS); Housing and Homelessness; Cannabis Program; and Economic Development and Resilience. Ms. LeGoe reviewed associated performance tracking using the County's ClearPoint software program.

The Board members provided initial thoughts on their priorities and objectives for 2021:

Supervisor Bullock shared his interest in connecting with his constituents and County staff; assessing the District 5 service levels; COVID recovery; peak period visitation; County Libraries; and a focus on mental health.

Supervisor Hall stressed the importance of directing resources to COVID recovery; Workforce and Affordable Housing; Broadband expansion; Resiliency; Diversity; trails and rivers; moving forward with Cannabis expansion; support of the County's arts community; mental health; and Wildfire/PSPS.

Supervisor Scofield was interested in focusing on the creation of the District 2 Higgins Area Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) in 2021.

Supervisor Hoek spoke of her interest in focusing on COVID recovery; Wildfire and Emergency Preparedness; increased support of Code Compliance Division in their efforts to enforce Cannabis regulations; Housing; Parks and Recreation; creation of a Penn Valley Community Center and support of the North San Juan Community Center; and Broadband expansion.

Supervisor Miller was looking at Broadband expansion; Housing and Homelessness; financial stability of Nevada County; PSPS, which was now also wind events as well as wildfire events; Homeowner's Insurance; and he looked towards a closer working relationship with Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E).

The Board members had their first opportunity to consider and vote on their top Priorities for 2021:

A. Priorities:

Fiscal Stability; Wildfire; PSPS; Housing; and Resilience.

B. Priorities:

Economic Development; Cannabis Programming; and Homelessness.

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### **Financial Update Presentation:**

Mr. Martin Polt, Deputy County Executive Officer/Chief Fiscal Officer, provided the budget update, including a year-end recap of Fiscal Year 2019/20, update of Fiscal Year 2020/21, and expected fiscal challenges and preparations for Fiscal Year 2021/22.

Mr. Polt explained that the 2019/20 Year-End totals ended better than expected. Although staff had expected a decline of \$2 million due to costs relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, the actual amount was a decline of approximately \$600,000. He reported that staff is expecting revenue to have a neutral impact overall in Fiscal Year 2020/21, although departments have been asked to carefully monitor their budgets, and to apply caution when using fund balance. Mr. Polt expected to see Fiscal Year 2020/21 end with approximately \$30.6 million in General Fund balance. He reviewed preparations for Fiscal Year 2021/22, and projected the year-end fund balance would be approximately \$28.7 million. Mr. Polt reported on the proposed 2021/2 Budget Policies, which were modified to address potential uncertainties resulting from the ongoing pandemic.

Board questioning and discussion ensued.

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Mr. Steve Monaghan, Chief Information Officer, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) Settlement. He explained that the settlement amount of \$3.4 million was received in July 2020, and he provided staffs recommendations for use of the funds. Staff proposed directing \$1,055,000 to Wildfire (Communications & Planning; Vegetation Management; Updates to the County Wildfire Preparedness Plan, Fire Safe Council programming, and potential green waste site); \$1,297,000 to address Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) (Generators for the Eric Rood Administrative Center; Wayne Brown Correctional Facility, and Health & Human Services Agency buildings); and \$1,000,000 towards Economic Development (\$750,000 Broadband expansion and \$250,000 Regional Housing trust fund). Mr. Monaghan asked for Board direction, noting that further discussion would take place during the next day's continued Workshop.

Board questioning ensued.

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### III. [SR 21-0042](#) Emergency Preparedness Presentation

Mr. Steve Monaghan, Chief Information Officer, reviewed the Board's 2020 Wildfire and Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) Objectives. He provided a PowerPoint presentation and reported on the multiple emergency events, that resulted in activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Nevada, Yuba, Placer Unit Chief Brian Estes continued the PowerPoint presentation, reporting out information regarding results of the 2020 California fire season. There were a total of 8,112 fires through the State Responsibility Area (SRA): of those, 125 were located within Nevada County. A total of 1.5 million acres were burned, and 9,949 structures were destroyed. Chief Estes added that it was a record-setting year, with over 4.2 million acres of combined private and federal lands burned in the State of California.

Chief Estes reported on the fuels and weather outlook for the 2021 fire season, which is expected to begin in April. La Nina is predicted, bringing with it colder temperatures and a lower than average level of precipitation. Grass loading looks to be lower than average, although there are still dead and downed fuels left from the drought of 2015.

Board questioning and discussion ensued.

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Following the lunch recess, Chair Miller called the Workshop back into order and Sheriff Shannan Moon provided highlights of her past two years as Nevada County's Sheriff.

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Fire Chief Jim Turner, Nevada County Consolidated Fire District, reviewed the challenges and reported on the development of relationships between Nevada County and other jurisdictions. He reported that his District has achieved some success resulting from fuel inspections, and although there is still more work to be done, the foundation has been built.

Sheriff's Lieutenant Bob Jakobs, OES Emergency Operations Coordinator, reported on suggested revisions to the County's Defensible Space Ordinance relating to fuels on open lands. During inspections they have found areas with high fuel loads on parcels bordering improved parcels, which poses a threat to residentially zoned properties. The current Ordinance only provides structural defensible space up to 100 feet and roadside clearances. Lt. Jakobs reviewed the process of stakeholder input, and he reported on the resulting recommendations: 1) OES will coordinate with the Planning Department to utilize zoning regulations to guide a potential ordinance; 2) OES will conduct an assessment on the potential impacts of the ordinance on the County's Defensible Space Inspection Program; and 3) OES will engage with the community to seek feedback.

Board questioning and discussion ensued.

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Supervisors Hall and Hoek, provided an introduction to the Yuba River Public Safety Cohort presentation.

Mr. Jeffrey Thorsby, Senior Management Analyst, reported that the Cohort is a multi-agency work group consisting of Federal, State, local and community stakeholders with the purpose of addressing jurisdictional policy gaps, and coordinating public safety and law enforcement efforts within the South Yuba River corridor. Accomplishments include: implementation of a Fire Ban Ordinance; parking fines and enforcement; and increased communication and partnerships between jurisdictions. Mr. Thorsby shared their focus for 2021, including: aligning Cohort activities with BOS Objectives/Initiatives; continuing BOS staffing support; facilitating efforts to address low-hanging fruit; and exploring visitor impacts and capacity.

Board discussion ensued.

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Mr. Paul Cummings, Office of Emergency Services (OES) Program Manager, provided an overview of his department's response to the 2020 Board Objective regarding Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). Some of their major accomplishments include: the Cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City remaining energized during the 2020 PSPS events; the Board, County Executive Officer, and OES worked with Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) to increase hazardous vegetation reduction and system hardening; partnered with non-profits to mitigate impacts on vulnerable residents; encouraged County telecom providers to harden their infrastructure against PSPS; advocated to California's Joint Legislative committee on Emergency Management around PSPS and its impact on rural communities; and transferred \$500,000 of Rule 20A credits to Nevada City, allowing their undergrounding project to proceed. Additionally, OES received grant funding, and is in the process of installing generators at the Eric Rood Administrative Center. Mr. Cummings recommended incorporating the Board's PSPS Objective into its Wildfire Objective as the events both relate to fire weather.

Board questioning and discussion ensued.

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Mr. Caleb Dardick, Project Administrator, provided an overview of the Board's direction to engage stakeholders in the development of a public safety evacuation and hazardous vegetation reduction tax measure to submit to voters in 2020. He explained that due to the COVID pandemic, meeting with stakeholders was placed on hold to focus on the County's response to COVID relief. Mr. Dardick reported on the 'new normal' of increased public safety threats including wildfires, PSPS, droughts, floods, pandemics, and heat events, as well as the need for local control.

He stressed the need for the County to be self-reliant, self-sufficient, and ready for anything. Plans moving forward include building upon 2020's successes, starting with the Office of Emergency Services Roadmap for Action, and development of a Countywide Community Emergency Services Needs Assessment. Staff will coordinate with other jurisdictions, public safety, and community partners to receive public input on the Assessment. Mr. Dardick reported that costs related to wildfire response are astounding; focused research will include a cost analysis and exploration of funding sources, including a ballot measure for 2022.

Mr. Steve Monaghan, Chief Information Officer, recommended incorporating the Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) Objective into the Wildfire Objective for 2021.

Board discussion and questioning ensued.

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- IV. [SR 21-0043](#) Economic Development Presentation
- Rural County Representatives of California Economic Development Projects Update
  - County Economic Development and Broadband Update

#### **Rural County Representatives of California Economic Development Projects Update**

Mr. Craig Ferguson, Senior Vice President, and Ms. Barbara Hayes, Chief Economic Development Officer, Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) representatives, reported on the Golden State Finance Authority (GSFA), an affiliate of RCRC, that was established in 1993 to provide affordable housing finance solutions. GSFA expanded its authority to finance emergency and infrastructure projects, and has provided over \$45 million in down payment assistance to California homebuyers. Additionally, GSFA works with local economic development professionals to support regional and countywide strategies and projects, focusing on rural broadband development, forest resiliency, and infrastructure financing.

Ms. Hayes reported on their Forest Resiliency initiative to reduce the risk of wildfire and restoration of the health and resiliency of California's forests. Efforts are being made to build biomass plants for processing of green bio-waste that has been removed from landfills. Their first site is in development stages in Tuolumne County, and they are looking for additional sites located in Northern California.

Ms. Hayes and Mr. Ferguson reported on RCRC's advocacy relating to rural broadband expansion. RCRC is taking an aggressive stance in support of the following broadband principles: availability for all California residents; fiber in the ground; all areas of California to have fast broadband speeds; open access and public benefit; and the use of public monies.

Board questioning and discussion ensued.

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### **County Economic Development and Broadband Update**

Mr. Caleb Dardick, Project Administer, reviewed the Board's 2020 Economic Development Objective, to proactively support job-enhancing economic development. He provided an overview of the County's COVID-19 Economic Development response to small businesses and non-profits, and reported on the Nevada County Relief Fund, which has raised over \$1 million in new public-private partnership funding.

Ms. Kristin York Sierra Business Council's (SBC) Vice President of Business Innovation, provided SBC's 6-month report focusing on Business Technical Assistance, Warm Handoff Coordination, and Rural Broadband Expansion. She reviewed Nevada County's unemployment rate, sharing that the biggest job losses were in the service, entertainment and tourism sector, and the biggest gains were in the logistics and finance sector. Real Estate trends show that the median home prices in Nevada County have increased by 24% over 2019 prices, due to low inventory and high demand. Ms. York noted that 408 businesses were assisted by SBC, and they provided 1,585 counseling hours to local businesses.

Moving forward with the Board's consideration, Mr. Dardick recommended renewal of the SBC contract with a focus on business recovery; evaluation and development of recommendations regarding GoNevadaCounty.com for Fiscal Year 2021/22; and renewal of the Economic Development Objective for 2021.

Board discussion ensued.

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Mr. Steve Monaghan, Chief Information Officer, reported on Last Mile Broadband policies for Board consideration, including: adoption of a policy declaring broadband as essential infrastructure; support of a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to expedite environmental permitting; increased funding towards the Last-Mile grant program; update of the County's broadband strategy; and expansion of broadband by leveraging grants. Mr. Monaghan recommended moving the Resiliency Objective into the Economic Development Objective with a focus on energy savings and job creation, and consideration of a stand-alone Broadband Objective for 2021.



Board discussion and questioning ensued. The Supervisors shared their agreement with a stand-alone Objective for broadband expansion. Supervisor Hall suggested additional language, aiming to 'leave no one behind.' Supervisor Miller was interested in looking further into Golden State Finance Authority (GFSA) for broadband funding, or low-income loans. All Supervisors provided their support for continuing the contract with Sierra Business Council (SBC).

Ms. Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer, heard Board agreement to bring back an EIR project for Last-Mile Broadband, and to separate broadband expansion from the Economic Development Objective.

Board discussion ensued.

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V. [SR 21-0072](#) Wrap-Up

Ms. Lori Burkart Frank, Facilitator, provided an overview of the day’s discussions. She reviewed expectations and guidelines set during the morning and provided information regarding Wednesday’s Workshop agenda. In response to Ms. Burkart Frank's request for suggestions to improve their experience, the Board members mentioned that they would like more time set aside for questioning.

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**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Chair Miller adjourned the remote meeting at 4:07 p.m. to Friday, January 29, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.*

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Signature and Attestation

Dan Miller, Chair

ATTEST:

By:

Julie Patterson Hunter, Clerk of the Board