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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BOARD AGENDA MEMO

MEETING DATE: April 8, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jeffrey Thorsby, Chief of Staff

SUBJECT: Resolution designating the Indian Springs School, located at 17455 Indian Springs Road, Penn Valley, CA 95946 (APN 051-310-034), as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 25-03

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: N/A

BACKGROUND: On January 17, 2025, the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission (NCHLC) voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to designate the Indian Springs School, located at 17455 Indian Springs Road, Penn Valley, CA 95946 (APN 051-310-034), as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 25-03. Specifically on November 18, 2024, the current owner of the building, Sue Hoek, applied to the NCHLC requesting the site of the Indian Springs School be considered and designated as a County historical landmark. Recognizing the Indian Springs School is another step in the continued efforts of the NCHLC to obtain historical designation of the remaining 19th century schoolhouses that played such an important part in the history of Nevada County.

As outlined in the attached supporting documents, the Indian Springs School is one of the earliest schools established in Penn Valley. The school opened in 1856 as a private school and was operated by Henry Lewis Hatch, a pioneer who came to the area from Vermont in 1852. In 1861, the school had slightly unique curriculum elements for the time and it worked to prepare young gentlemen for business and for college and to “fit young men and women for teaching, and to qualify them for all the just claimr [sic] of Society.” Indian Springs School operated as a private school until 1868 when the Indian Springs School District was formed. At that time, Henry Lewis Hatch sold the building and adjoining property to the School District where it continued to operate as a public school until 1954.

During the summer of 1954 the California Division of Architecture declared that Indian Springs School as well as another local school, the Rough & Ready School, “unsafe for occupancy and beyond practical repair.” When the school received this declaration, the

students were transferred to other schools. In 1954, Lowell Robinson purchased the school at public auction, where it was used as a community center under the name of Indian Springs Community Hall. By 1957 the Indian Springs School was renamed the Indian Springs Community Hall, but the public continued to affectionately refer to it as the "Old Indian Springs School House." The building has remained in the Robinson family since 1954 and has been used for many community activities.

As such, there is no doubt that the Indian Springs School is a historical landmark. Therefore, the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission recommends the Board of Supervisors adopt the attached Resolution designating the Indian Springs School, located at 17455 Indian Springs Road, Penn Valley, CA 95946 (APN 051-310-034), as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 25-03.

Initiated: Carissa Cyr, Senior Management Analyst

Approved: Jeffrey Thorsby, Chief of Staff

Submittal Date: March 24, 2025