

## **CRESTON ADVISORY BODY**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Creston Community Center

Wednesday, October 18, 2023 7:00 – 9:30 PM

Meetings scheduled on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month except December..

#### **1) Call to Order – Flag Salute**

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm. A quorum of the CAB Board was established. Present - Thomas Edel, Kurt Almond, Sheila Lyons, Mike Aarons and Jim Wortner (alternate). Absent were Roy Barba, Matt Lyng and Don Clark.

#### **2) CAB Recorder for this meeting – Jim Wortner for Don Clark who was absent. Next month will be Don Clark.**

Jim Wortner took meeting minutes and submitted these minutes for review on Friday, November 3, 2023.

#### **3) Minutes of the previous meeting(s) (5 min) (Aug. 19th, Jim Wortner drafted)**

Meeting minutes from the September 20, 2023. No changes. No discussion. Motion to approve made by Thomas Edel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Workner. Vote was unanimous. CAB 9-20-2023 meeting minutes approved.

#### **4) Limited Public and/or CAB Member Comments for Items NOT on the agenda (2-3 min each). Including Community events and other items of interest.**

**-Bryan Yates of the Bovine Bicycle Classic, to be held October 28<sup>th</sup> in Creston vicinity.**

Bryan outlined the second annual Bovine Bicycle Classic planned for October 28, 2023 around the greater Creston area. Over 450 bicycle riders from the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas were expected on Creston roads between 12:30 - 4:00 pm. Much of the riding takes place off-road rather than on the local roads. This event provides funding for Operation Surf, a series of surfing camps for injured veterans. CHP is providing for the bicycle rider's safety with the Sheriff Department's Search and Rescue teams.

**-CGardenC & CWomen'sC sponsored Halloween event here at the Creston Community Center, Oct. 31, 5-7 PM – hot dogs, candy and baked goods free to all attendees**

#### **5) Public Safety - Cal Fire, Sheriff, CHP, etc. – ~5 min. each**

**Sheriff's Department - Deputy John McKenney** Not present. No report

**CHP - Lieutenant Chandler Stewart - Templeton Station** - Not present. The report and details are attached.

**Cal Fire - Fire Captain Chad Mitchell**

Captain Ryan reported a total of 23 calls for this period. 15 medical, 3 fires, 3 traffic and one house fire.

**6) New Business – (30+ min.)**

- a. **Supervisor Peschong, District #1 SLO County Supervisor (Paso Robles, and other parts of the North County including Shandon & San Miguel), to visit CAB.**

*The CAB recorded video and audio of Supervisor Peschong's discussion. This video is posted on the CAB website and can be accessed and viewed by the public for a limited time (storage space issue) for specific information and details of this discussion at this CAB meeting.*

San Luis Obispo County Supervisor John Peschong representing District 1 for over 7 years. He is the current chairman of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors and is seeking re-election in the March 2024 primaries. Supervisor Peschong stated he was at this CAB meeting as Supervisor for District 1 and NOT as a candidate for the March 2024 elections.

While Supervisor Preschong represents District 1, and Creston is in Supervisor Debbie Arnold's District 5, many Creston area issues and topics were discussed...

- Paso Robles Ground Water Basin issues/politics with 3 South County Supervisors controlling the majority at the Board of Supervisors and controlling the ground basin.
- Homeless in San Luis Obispo County with over 1,400 homeless, mostly males between 18-30 yrs. Mental health issues and drug abuse were identified by Supervisor Peschong as the greatest cause. State and local funds to be applied to housing and detoxification centers with metrics to curb the drug addiction problem. SLO County will look to other California counties for ideas and tested solutions to the homeless issue.
- Speeding up the building permit process to build a single family home and get more housing construction through the Planning Department was a priority for him.
- SLO County staffing issues post COVID has staff 20% understaffed down by 600 personnel.
- January/March 2023 storm damages impact 600+ locations including bridges, roads and other infrastructure.
- Cannabis retail sales in unincorporated areas are not supported by Supervisor Peschong, However, when questioned on cannabis grows forced onto our neighborhoods and family farms he stated he will look at each project on its individual merits and impacts. He recently voted to reduce the tax on cannabis operations. It was due to go to 6% but B of S voted to reduce it from the current 4%, down to 2%, a reversal of a previous vote to ladder up the taxes by 2% per year. It was noted that the County is spending more on cannabis enforcement than it is taking in from these taxes.
- Lack of code enforcement - specifically on commercial camping - is an issue in rural Creston. If Code Enforcement staff are not able to address a specific code violation, he suggested we take pictures of any violation and/or call him at +1(805) 440-7818 his cell phone number.
- Diablo Canyon nuclear power station is supported by Supervisor Peschong. He does not support the 3CE electricity provider option and believes it is not good for the community.

**7) Planning Department Update & Project Referrals - CAB Liaison-Lane Sutherland (10+ min).**

**a. Cannabis projects update – Jim Wortner & P&B liaison if present.**

There are 3 active cannabis projects in the greater Creston/CAB boundaries area. A Public Request Act (PRA) from the CAB Board was recently sent to the Planning Department. We are waiting on the answers to this PRA.

**8) Fifth District Supervisor Report–Supervisor Debbie Arnold or LA Kathleen Goble-Zoom maybe**

Debbie Arnold is retiring at the end of this current term as our Supervisor District 5. She was also in attendance at this CAB Meeting and provided her update and perspectives - a very sobering look at what the future may bring to SLO County and to Creston:

- She introduced Heather Moreno currently on the Atascadero City Council and acting mayor as one of two candidates seeking the District 5 Supervisor seat in March 2024.
- The recent resignation of Wade Horton, previously the San Luis Obispo County Chief Administrative Officer (like the CEO of SLO County) was discussed. We have an interim chief and the County is still looking for a full time replacement.
- Priorities have changed with the new 3/2 majority at the Board of Supervisors. The Board vote is now weighted to South County and urban areas versus North County and rural areas. There is a lack of understanding by the Board for North County as different with different needs and priorities.
- Road and Infrastructure spending being deprioritized for rural areas vs housing and homeless
- New trash services with Waste Management with trash rates going up
- Planning Department changes with less customer services and more “cost recovery” to generate more revenues to the Planning Department
- Proposition 47 and 57 have downgraded felonies to misdemeanors generating more crime, retail theft ( $\leq$ \$900), illegal drug use in public spaces and threats to public safety. More crime costs which will be paid for by tax dollars.
- Watch out for propositions being proposed to make Proposition 13 changes. Proposal are coming from San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors and state of California

**9) Unfinished Business – (15 minutes) –**

**Review of the questions for the District #5 Supervisor candidates. Revise as needed. Publicity for the events?**

The CAB was informed by SLO County Council, by way of Supervisor Arnold, that we can not invite Supervisor candidates to address the Creston Community at CAB meetings. The CAB Board was trying to update and inform the Creston Community by having all the candidates take the same set of questions and be given the same allotted time to answer. These previously planned Question and Answer events at the November and January CAB meetings with the District 5 Supervisor candidates format will now be changed. We were informed that the candidates may address CAB if they ask to come and introduce themselves. We can not give them a specific set of questions ahead of time to answer at the CAB meeting. All questions must be spontaneous. Both candidates for District #5 Supervisor, Suan Funk & Heather

Moreno, were present and both candidates asked if they could attend a future CAB meeting....Susan in November 2023 and Heather in January 2024.

**Report from the Paso Basin Cooperative Committee Special Meeting if available  
– Murray Powell**

Murray Powell, Vice President on TAAG (Templeton) outlined the water issues and politics as a member of the Paso Basin Cooperative Committee for the upcoming special meeting to develop Paso Basin water use and management regulations. Murray outlined how these meetings could impact our water uses and wells:

- CAB and the Creston Community were encouraged to get involved and to attend these meetings. To push back on this newly proposed political infrastructure, water management and regulations. Reiterated the fact that no one elected by North County residents is present to represent us on this committee.
- A film documentary/expose being developed over the last year documenting these issues along with dry wells and this process with in SLO County. Issues include political controls and funding by big water users. One property owner whose well went dry here is Creston is being interviewed as part of this project. This documentary/expose should be published in Spring of 2024.
- Despite the January/March rains this year, there is still a water overdraft problem in our basin. Studies have shown 92% of water use from the basin are used by agriculture who own 8% of the land, and with 8% used by rural residences who own 92% of the land.

**10) Committee Reports/Next Steps (5-10 min each as needed) –**

- a. **By-Laws – Sheila L. & Thomas E.** – nothing to report
- b. **Elections – Sheila, Susan S. & Judy Blankenship (public)** - No action at this time.
- c. **Public Information -- Roy Barba, Tom Edel & Mike Aarons, Kurt Almond Use of the TV, etc. by other CATCH organizations and CCC renters**  
No reports or updates.

**11) Treasurer’s Report – (5 min) Roy Barba** – not present to report, next month.

**12) Future meetings and agenda items- Next meeting Nov. 15, 2023**

**Candidates for 5<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor in 2024 –**

**Susan Funk to come to CAB Nov. 15, 2023 and Heather Moreno Jan. 17, 2024**

**No word back from Congressman Panetta’s office regarding a visit to CAB.**

No future agenda items.

**13) Adjournment by approximately 9:30 p.m.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 pm.