

## MINUTES

### Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission November 25, 2013 4:00 pm

**Present:** Chairman Rick Holley, Kathryn Murray, Roger Gitlin, Sparky Countess, and Gerry Hemmingsen

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Executive Officer George Williamson, Karen Phillips, and Gretchen Stuhr, various members of the Smith River Cemetery District

#### 1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Holley called the meeting to order in regular session at 4:00 p.m.

#### 2. Public Hearings (CONTINUED)

##### A. Smith River Cemetery District Draft MSR/SOI Update (ATTACHMENT 2A)

Mr. Williamson reported that he met with the cemetery board and worked through items that could enhance revenues for the District. The Commission requested that the board members be present to discuss their plans. Smith River Cemetery District board members Juanita Henson, Pat Maris, Colleen Luttrell, Janice Hill and Glenn Hill were present to answer questions regarding the District. The continued public hearing was reopened at 4:03 p.m. Colleen Luttrell noted that they are not interested in hooking on to the coattails of the Smith River CSD and the CSD is not interested in having them. Staff noted that the reasoning for that suggestion/provision is that it follows the rules for a subsidiary district and is an option of the Commission. Ms. Luttrell reiterated that the CDS was not interested in having the merger occur either. She noted that maintenance costs are the biggest expense for the District, they can run upwards of \$600 per month. In the past, volunteers of the community mowed the cemetery. Having volunteers perform the maintenance would save considerable costs for the District. \$7,200 is budget for maintenance. The old lawn mower has been retired and they will need a new one, a new one would be approximately \$1,499. According to the District board, there is no deficit in the budget. The Commissioners wanted to know where the money is to cover the shortfall each year. According to the secretary, there is a reserve fund to cover shortages. The cost of burial plots is very low when compared to other cemeteries in the area. Board members note that Wier's Mortuary takes care of the opening of the grave and burial. It was noted that there is no maintenance included in the plot cost, and the annual assessment collection dropped off in the 1970's for some reason. It appears that the assessment had a sunset clause and is not longer being collected. It would take a ballot measure to adopt new assessments and the board does not feel that it would pass a vote of the citizens. The board was encouraged to think long-term about the future of the cemetery. Pat Maris noted that her father-in-law donated property to the District in 1949. She also tried to donate property to the District and was turned down in more recent years. Staff will look into why the donation was

declined, perhaps the laws have changed, etc. and the donation could be reconsidered. Land dedication would assist the District and resolve some of their problems. Pat Maris noted that this is “our heritage” and there are inquires from all over regarding the gravesites at the cemetery. Carolyn Westbrook has published a book regarding the cemetery and Smith River in general, the proceeds of which, after printing costs, will go to the District. Commissioner Gitlin asked if the expansion of the District should go before the voters. The District representatives noted that a donation of land would only be an acre or half acre at most. The plot fees need to be raised in order to provide a positive cash flow and provide a permanent maintenance fund. The use of volunteers and lowering of other costs would assist as well as going to the community for donations. Ms. Luttrell noted that her husband and others volunteer and anonymous donors have helped pay for the cost of repairs and maintenance. The cemetery is very nice and well-maintained and they get a lot of compliments. The percentage should be about 95% of the plot cost set aside for long-term maintenance costs. Chairman Holley closed hearing at 4:36 p.m.

On a motion by Commissioner Murray, seconded by Commissioner Countess and unanimously carried on a polled vote, the Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission approved and adopted the Resolution 2013-03, entitled, RESOLUTION OF THE DEL NORTE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION APPROVING SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE AND MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW FOR THE SMITH RIVER CEMETERY DISTRICT, as presented.

### **3. Regular Business**

#### **A. Approval of October 28, 2013 Draft Minutes (ATTACHMENT 3A)**

Discussion was held regarding page 2 third paragraph of the minutes. The paragraph will be clarified at the next meeting.

On a motion by Commissioner Countess, seconded by Commissioner Hemmingsen, and unanimously carried on a polled vote, the Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission adopted the minutes, and requested wording clarification on page 2, paragraph 3. Clarification will be made at the next meeting by reading the clarification wording. No other action will be taken on the October 28, 2013 minutes.

#### **B. Del Norte County Fair Board – Plan for Services Update (ATTACHMENT 3B)**

Mr. Williamson noted that he delivered a complete draft of the plan for services to the Fair Board today and they will meet tomorrow and discuss the plan. Their strategic plan is drafted and they are meeting with counsel regarding moving forward. Good progress is being made in this matter. No action was taken.

### **4. Inquiries, Correspondence, Application Status and Referrals**

#### **A. Staff - The Executive Officer will provide a report of current projects, issues of interest, and pending legislation.**

Executive Officer Williamson reported that there were no reports to give at this time.

**B. Commission - On their own initiative, Commission members may make brief announcements or reports on their own activities. They may ask questions for clarification, make a referral to staff or request a business matter for a future agenda per Government Code Section 54954.2 (a).**

The following reports were made: Commissioner Countess asked about his 700 Form. Due to a misunderstanding staff believed that they should keep the originals; staff will forward the original forms to the County Clerk immediately.

**C. Public - Public comment on items of interest within LAFCo subject matter jurisdiction, and not otherwise appearing on the agenda. No action may be taken on any item not appearing on the agenda.**

There were no public comments.

**5. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chairman Holley adjourned the meeting at 4:48 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on January 27, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Phillips, Recording Secretary