



Supervisor Jeffries' Board Report

January 8-15, 2019

In starting the new year, and in my new role as Chairman of the Board, I've been thinking about ways to better communicate what it is we do on the Board of Supervisors. In my monthly Jeffries Journal e-newsletter (<http://supervisorjeffries.com/opencms/News/Newsletter.html>), I talk a lot about big picture issues and some specific problems we are wrestling with on the Board of Supervisors, and the local media generally will cover one county issue per week, but I would like to provide a broader picture of what it is we do at our board meetings, and how we are trying to serve our constituents. One thought is to do a written report of each board meeting we hold. Sometimes these will come out on Tuesday afternoons after the meeting, but if the meetings go long or there are too many other things happening in my office, they may also come out on Wednesdays. I will post them on my Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/SupervisorJeffries>), in the news section of my website (<http://supervisorjeffries.com/opencms/News/>), and on my Twitter page (<https://twitter.com/supjeffries>).

This first report will cover our first two meetings of the year. At our January 8th meeting, we began by swearing in our two new members, Karen Spiegel (replacing retiring Supervisor John Tavaglione in the 2nd District) and Jeff Hewitt (replacing retiring Supervisor Marion Ashley in the 5th District). We also swore in 4th District Supervisor Victor Manuel "Manny" Perez for his first full term on the Board, having been appointed to fill the seat vacated by Supervisor John Benoit upon his death. These changes on the Board mean that I am now the most senior member, with only six years of service!

I was then officially elected as Chair of the Board by my colleagues. Chair is primarily a ceremonial position, whose most important role is simply to run the Board meetings, but I appreciate the support of my colleagues for this position. I am looking forward to making the meetings run a bit leaner and more efficiently than has been the case in the past by making some changes to the agenda and the way we do our presentations. We have many important issues to address in this coming year, and I believe we owe it to you to get to the business of the meeting as directly and professionally as possible, so we don't waste the public's valuable time, or the time of the various county executives and staff waiting for their items to be heard.

Items of importance to the County or the 1st District heard January 8th include:

Creation of Budget Committees: Item 3.1 on the agenda (meeting video time stamp: 1:02) was an item introduced by myself and Supervisor Manny Perez to create budget committees for the first time in Riverside County. I had introduced this concept before, but the previous board majority rejected it, preferring to leave the details of budget preparation to our staff. With the increasingly dark budget projections as we deal with crushing pension obligations and other increased state costs being passed on to Riverside County, I felt it was critical that the Board take a more active role in developing our \$5+ billion budget, and hold public meetings throughout the year, where board members, executive staff, department staff, labor, and the general public can take a deeper look at the budget and service goals for our various agencies and departments. I'm happy to say that my current colleagues on the Board agree with me, and this idea will now be implemented. The Executive Office will come back with a schedule and we will confirm the members of each committee at next week's meeting.

Extension of Local Emergency for Holy Fire: Item 3.14. We initially declared a local emergency immediately following August's Holy Fire, in the mountains above Lake Elsinore and Temescal Valley. While the fire was still burning, we began planning for the potential flooding and debris flows we knew could result from the scorched canyons above these communities. Unfortunately, we have already seen some damage from the subsequent storms. By extending the declaration of emergency, we can continue to count the costs of repair and preparation towards our eventual requests for assistance from the state and federal governments. Passed without discussion.

No Place Like Home Program Grant Application: Item 3.20. (meeting video time stamp 1:20) The Board authorized the Department of Behavioral Health to apply for state funds to finance the development of permanent supportive housing for persons with a serious mental illness who are homeless, chronically homeless or at-risk of chronic homelessness. Homelessness (particularly the mentally ill/addict population) is a huge problem in Riverside County, and this is an opportunity to get state funds to assist us. We received a brief presentation from our Director of Behavioral Health, Dr. Matthew Chang before approval.

Paving Main Street in Good Hope: Item 3.27. Good Hope is one of the poorest areas of my district, and most in need of infrastructure (roads, flood control facilities, etc). This item will authorize the paving of a portion of Main Street (Main Street in Good Hope is an unpaved road, believe it or not), using locally generated funds. Passed without discussion.

Van Buren Blvd Agreement with City of Riverside: Item 3.28. Van Buren Boulevard is a critical artery along the border of the City of Riverside and the unincorporated community of Woodcrest, and it is plagued with terrible congestion issues. The Transportation Department (Transportation) and the City of Riverside (City), intend to widen Van Buren Boulevard between Washington Street and Wood Road from four lanes to six lanes. This section serves approximately 45,000 motorists daily and widening Van Buren Boulevard from four to six lanes will improve traffic flow and reduce delays. From the Form 11: "This Agreement between the County and City establishes the roles and responsibilities of each agency for overall development and implementation of the project, specifically the Environmental Document and Plans,

Specifications, and Estimate, and specifies that the County Transportation Department will be the lead agency for the development of the project. Each agency will be responsible for funding project costs within their respective jurisdiction; 45% of the project is located within City jurisdiction, and 55% is located within County jurisdiction. The funding for Right of Way acquisition and Construction phases will be determined at a later date.” Passed without discussion.

Rapid Re-Housing Assistance Services to Homeless CALWORKS Customers: Item 3.30. Increase of almost a half million dollars in state funding to help Riverside County provide “immediate housing and supportive services for at least 275 homeless CalWORKs families receiving services through the DPSS Family Stabilization Services (FSS) program... This project will provide much needed assistance to individuals and families in the CalWORKs Rapid Re-housing program, and will provide support to homeless CalWORKs families that need immediate, permanent housing before they are able to progress toward employment and self-sufficiency. Housing stability is one of the greatest challenges that CalWORKs families face. It is estimated that over 3,790 CalWORKS families (almost 8% of the total CalWORKs population) are homeless or near homeless within the County of Riverside. Participating families and the community will benefit from reductions in the number of families experiencing homelessness, reductions in the duration of time a family is homeless and reducing the amount and duration of CalWORKS financial assistance by rapidly stabilizing families in crisis.” Passed without discussion.

Continuation of Emergency Protection Projects in Temescal Valley and Lake

Elsinore: Item 11.2. In preparation for the potential floods and debris flows in the Holy Fire Scar Area, the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District moved very quickly to perform critical improvements and enhancements to some of their debris basins and flood control channels. These improvements have already shown themselves to be incredibly valuable in protecting homes, schools, and infrastructure in the communities below the Holy Fire, but more work needs to be done, and continual maintenance has to take place to make sure these basins can continue to be effective. This item approves an additional \$2.25 million from the Flood Control District (not general fund) budget within these zones. Passed without discussion.

If you wish to watch the January 8th meeting (or any portion of the meeting) or read the reports on any agenda items, the link is here:

<http://riversidecountyca.igq2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=2002&Format=Minutes>

January 15th Board Meeting

Yesterday’s (January 15th) meeting wasn’t nearly as busy, but there were still a few items of note. Our CEO, George Johnson, updated the Board on potential impacts to the county from the federal government “shutdown” (0:25 on the meeting video). There are few immediate impacts to the county, other than a slowdown in reviews and approvals from federal agencies that our transportation and public works agencies are waiting on, but if the shutdown continues into

February, it may jeopardize residents dependent on HUD housing vouchers or those who rely on food stamps and other federal aid programs.

At the 0:28 mark of the meeting Deputy CEO-Legislative Affairs Brian Nestande gave a report on Governor Newsom's initial budget proposal, and its potential impact on the county. On the good news side, there is no effort to force further IHSS costs on the county (we had previously been threatened with an additional \$30+ million in costs), and a \$13 million disparity in Child Support Services spending for the county is proposed to be resolved, and disaster assistance for our recent fires and floods is included in his budget. There also are increases in spending on homelessness and low income housing in his budget. Big concerns include a potential effort to take away transportation funds from local governments if they do not build sufficient low income housing within their jurisdictions, and a threat to cap developer fees, which might force the county to absorb costs that should be passed along to the applicants.

Item 3.9 was the approval of the county's annual legislative platform which we use to guide our efforts to lobby for and against policies in Sacramento and Washington DC. Each department submits their own priorities, but once again, our number one priority is resolving funding inequities that have cost Riverside County tens of millions of dollars, primarily in mental health funding, but also in cap and trade revenues, and historically Child Support Services as well (though hopefully this will get resolved this year, per the report above). The whole platform is available as an attachment to the agenda. At the 0:39 mark on the video, there is a discussion about the platform, and more specifically about the need for further reforms to help address the crushing financial burden of pensions in Riverside County and state-wide.

The link to the January 15th agenda and video is here:

<http://riversidecountyca.igam2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=2028&MinutesID=2027&Format=Minutes&MediaFileFormat=mpeg4>

Our next scheduled Board Meeting is January 29th.