



SAN BENITO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Margie Barrios
District No. 1

Anthony Botelho
District No. 2
Vice-Chair

Robert Rivas
District No. 3

Jerry Muenzer
District No. 4

Jaime De La Cruz
District No. 5
Chair

County Administration Building – Board of Supervisors Chambers, 481 Fourth Street, Hollister, California

SPECIAL MEETING FEBRUARY 28, 2012 ACTION MINUTES

The Board of Supervisors of San Benito County met in the Board Chambers on the above date in *special session*. Supervisors De La Cruz, Botelho, Rivas, Muenzer and Barrios were present. Also present were County Administrative Officer Rich Inman, County Counsel Matthew Granger, and Clerk of the Board Denise Thome. Chairman De La Cruz presided.

6:00 p.m. CALL TO ORDER:

- a) Supervisor Botelho led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- b) *Upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, acknowledged Certificate of Posting.*

REGULAR AGENDA:

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE – R. Inman:

1) Discussion and direction to County Administrative Officer concerning FY 2012-2013 budget.

Chairman De La Cruz went over the ground rules for the meeting.

County Administrative Officer Rich Inman commented on what a devastating challenge was before them in regards to the budget. He explained that he would be presenting a broad overview including actions taken, ones that could be taken and methodology. He then gave a PowerPoint presentation.

Supervisor Botelho asked what the projected revenues were this year.

CAO Inman answered 26 million for this year.

Supervisor Rivas asked if the 49 full time equivalents (fte) referenced included vacant positions.

CAO Inman answered that it included those that were unfilled, vacant and eliminated. He spoke of reducing the fte's by 58 which would be the reductions and layoffs worst case scenario. He noted that there were other ways to address the deficit with more concessions starting at the top with Department Heads and unrepresented confidential employees.

Chairman De La Cruz asked if In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) was not general fund money.

CAO Inman replied that it was not.

Supervisor Barrios suggested not just the Department Heads and unrepresented but to go to the other groups.

CAO Inman stated that they were under no obligation.

Supervisor Barrios noted that Foster Care money was at their disposal.

CAO Inman concurred and noted that there were other non-mandated programs. He explained the methodology for department cuts, noting that not all departments were equal.

The Board adjourned at 6:15 p.m. to allow time for additional PowerPoint copies to be made for the audience and reconvened at 6:20 p.m.

Hollister resident Roxy Montana stated that the Grand Jury was a unique entity that was supervised by the Superior Court and paid by the County. She explained that Grand Jury expenses are payroll and expenses and that each term is different. She noted that the current Grand Jury will need additional funds to complete its term. She requested that they reexamine the Grand Jury budget and reinstate their budget by \$24,000.

President of Service Employees International Union (S.E.I.U.) Martha Booker stated that their dedication to San Benito is clear. She added that they were still there; strong and speaking up for what is right. She felt they could collaborate and work together, but the days of giving contracts to friends and familiar faces must stop. She spoke of stopping unlimited vacation accruals, adding that the payouts equaled lost jobs and elimination of service to the public.

Vice President of S.E.I.U. San Benito Chapter Denise Quintana thanked the Board for the opportunity and noted that they were there to support the budget process. She added that employees had been furloughed and had their pay frozen summarizing that they were public servants who had sacrificed. She stated that our San Benito County family is going through a challenging time. Ms. Quintana reported that they had requested of the CAO that they would like to meet with the Budget Committee.

Ruth Erickson of Friends of the San Benito County Library stated that if they reduced the library by 7.5 people there would be no one working and the library would close. She stated if that were the case they would probably be the only county without a library. Ms. Erickson also stated that if they closed, hundreds of children would be wandering the streets and getting into trouble and in turn more police time would have to be paid. She summarized by stating that the whole community uses the library and it cannot be run by volunteers as that would be illegal.

There being no further public comment, Chairman De La Cruz closed the public comment session.

Supervisor Botelho stated that he had been on the Board 7 ½ years and the first 3 years were pretty easy and then there was a recession which made it harder to work the budget. He commented that he appreciated everything the employees do and that the recession had hit deeper and harder than they expected and they had to figure a way to balance the budget. He appreciated S.E.I.U.'s willingness to work through this together. He explained that he was not looking to lay off 50 people but instead was looking to find areas of savings and ways to increase revenue. He felt that the capping of vacation and sick time needed to be done right away and that huge payouts were wrong and affected the budget. Supervisor Botelho commented that it needed to be resolved very soon, before the next budget. He further felt that they had to deal with a pension reform or the cost of benefits. He suggested that perhaps they could share the cost of Public Employees Retirement System (P.E.R.S.) with employees paying ½ of the 7% and the County pay the other half. He expressed hope that they

would keep an open mind to that idea and he resolved to try and save every job they could.

Supervisor Barrios felt that Supervisor Botelho had expressed what many of the other supervisors felt. She indicated that she would rather see concessions starting at the top. She noted that the Board took a 3% cut last year. Supervisor Barrios stated that they were now asking Department Heads and those below before they asked the people out there today. She felt it was sad to see parks and libraries cut as it caused an increase in crime when cut. She felt that concessions were where the County should be looking at and hoped there was a lot of volunteerism.

Supervisor Muenzer thanked everyone that came to the meeting that night. He concurred with S.E.I.U. remarks that they needed to deal with unlimited vacation and sick accruals. He added that they needed to get their revenues up and provide a continued effort to become business friendly. He wanted to make sure that they were not overcharging or causing penalties to local businesses. He also wanted to make sure all employees heard the message. He felt that new department heads needed to be hired at lower salaries. He further suggested that they look at unneeded and unused county property and selling it off. He concurred that money going into Cal P.E.R.S. needed to be looked at, adding that employees have to share what's being put in.

Supervisor Rivas stated that they certainly had a problem, a 5.3 million dollar problem. He added that there was no easy way to solve the problem. He stated that they value services provided. Supervisor Rivas felt the county needed to reinvent themselves as a county, as a government, and need to work with the City of Hollister in regards to law enforcement and fire protection. He stated that they needed your ideas on how to solve the problem. He encouraged them to call and schedule a meeting. He then thanked everyone.

Chairman De La Cruz thanked those people in the audience for being there. He stated that the Board needed their help and that this was the first start of the budget process. He reiterated that it was important that they hear from them. He wanted to show the public that they meant business. He commented that the Board had taken cuts and that they shared their pain, adding that they would probably take another cut. He noted that many of them work 2 jobs.

Supervisor Barrios noted that the Budget Committee consisting of Supervisor Rivas and herself had been invited to meet with S.E.I.U. She asked County Counsel if that was appropriate to do so.

County Counsel Granger stated that an ad hoc committee could meet with them.

Chairman De La Cruz asked staff to report to the Board on reserves that are available.

Supervisor Barrios did not want to give the impression that they would be negotiating, only taking information.

CAO Inman suggested that they meet with all bargaining units simultaneously.

Supervisor Barrios asked if he meant as a Budget Committee.

CAO Inman replied affirmatively.

Supervisor Barrios asked if Supervisor Rivas was in agreement.

Supervisor Rivas replied yes. *File #119*

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 6:52 p.m. to March 6, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

JAIME DE LA CRUZ, CHAIRMAN

San Benito County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Denise R. Thome, Clerk of the Board