

Minutes for 5 November 2020

The regular monthly meeting of the Gualala Municipal Advisory Council (GMAC) was held on Thursday, 5 November 2020 via Zoom.us. Council Members present were: Melissa Finley, Donald Hess, Robert Juengling, and Tom Murphy. Mendocino County Sheriff Matt Kendall; Sheriff's Deputy Lieutenant Joseph (DJ) Comer, and; Administrator Mary Mobert were also present. **Council Chair Juengling** convened the meeting at 18:02.

1. **Introductions and Announcements:**

Council Members introduced themselves.

2. **Consent Agenda:**

i. **Minutes:** 1 October 2020

It was moved by TM, seconded by DH, and unanimously carried that the Minutes be approve as presented.

ii. **Correspondence:** All acknowledged as received.

a. CalTrans E-mail: Re. Streetscaping Town Hall Meeting 14 January 2021

b. Phone Call to RJ Re. Neighbor Not Receiving Notification of CDP 2020_0015 (Graffin)

iii. **Approval of Agenda:**

It was moved by Council Member TM, seconded by Council Member DH, and unanimously carried that the Agenda be approved as amended by adding discussion of the letter to GMAC, CalTrans, and MCOG regarding the Streetscaping project to Item 6. b. Report: GCAP Ad Hoc Committee.

3. **Public Input on Non-agenda** None

4. **Report: Mendocino County Law/Code Enforcement:**

Sheriff Matt Kendall and Coast Commander Lieutenant Joseph (JD) Comer reported.

MK stated two new deputies will graduate and start working on the Coast soon. There have been a total of 1,213 cases of COVID in the County. Cases are fewer in the South Coast area. Covelo has a smaller population than Gualala but, at present, Covelo has 75% more cases and Anderson Valley has 25% more cases than the South Coast, which has had 2.5% of the County's total cases. There have been traffic complaints just south of Point Arena (PA) but nothing more serious.

Lt. JDC is aware issues of speeding on Old Stage Road and problems it causes. He is trying to get more service in the area. Illegal camping at the river was brought to his attention; his staff is becoming more present during evenings and at night. Drug trafficking and usage is a problem in PA; he is coordinating with other agencies and Sheriff's units to find solutions to combat it.

DH asked about speeding problems on Pacific Woods Road at all hours of the day. **JDC** said CalTrans would have to do speed survey but the limit may go up from 40 mph. He had heard no complaints about Pacific Woods, only Old Stage Road. Residents should let him know when it happens. He is meeting with all the supervisors and commanders for the Coast next week; this will be addressed it with the CHP as well. All speeding and loud mufflers incidents should be reported. He is usually in Gualala on Thursdays, sometimes more. His e-mail is: comerj@mendocinocounty.org and his cell number is: 621-3801. Contact him anytime.

MK noted when one or two drivers are cited, especially teens, speeding incidents go down and an example is set. Their parent's insurance goes up; again, an example is set.

RJ ask about speeding on Highway One after the resurfacing was finished. **MK** said Yes, the CHP has cited many speeders. Most are tourists, not locals. He is concerned about the rain next week making the roadway slick and causing accidents.

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MF asked if the Sheriff's office is doing due diligence to make sure they're not hiring someone affiliated with white supremacist groups. **MK** said background information and references were being thoroughly researched to avoid that possibility.

TM asked how residents can have drivers slowdown in Gualala. CalTrans is now collecting information for the streetscaping regarding various hazards along the highway and in town. **MK** noted towns are a difficult place to slow traffic, especially when driving from a straight stretch of highway. Gualala has this situation coming from both the north and south of town.

JDC agreed he and CHP Coastal Commander, Sergeant Aaron Finnegan, will meet with Murphy when they are in Gualala Thursday, 12 November.

RJ thanked Kendall and Comer for attending and giving their reports.

5. CalFire THP 1-20-00150-MEN: Gualala River at Little North Fork, 4 Miles north of Gualala (Hess & Juengling).

RJ had researched the THP; Hess hadn't but saw two logging trucks exiting from the North Fork area via the logging road at the green bridge. He understands this THP has not been approved and thought harvesting couldn't start as yet but doesn't know if that was true.

There are several roads into the area; he sent an aerial photo if it to DH. **TM** noted the turn off Fish Rock Road into the dump was right in that area.

RJ is very concerned that this is one of the only areas left for steelhead and salmon to survive. It was sad to see the last vestiges of fish habitat being logged. Young fish could be released there. There had been a concern in the past that contaminated water from the County dump located at the Gualala River headwaters might go into Little North Fork and harm habitat.

DH felt testing the water coming into the river in that area needs to be done.

Writing a letter to CalFire, Santa Rosa, to inform them GMAC was researching the THP and be discussing it again 3 December was discussed. **RJ** will write the letter. The item will be researched more deeply and kept on the agenda.

6. Council Matters:

a. **Old Business:** None

b. **Report: GCAP Ad Hoc Committee:** Updates on CalTrans & Petition (Juengling & Murphy)
RJ noted the letter from CalTrans regarding the new plan due in mid-December and public meeting, 14 January 2021.

TM stated *CalTrans* is working on new Alternative Plan, hopefully more in line with the commentary they received via public opinion. There will be a preview of the meeting and access to the online survey published mid-December on the *CalTrans* YouTube channel. The results will be reported at their 14 January YouTube meeting where an additional survey will be conducted. To attend that meeting, one must register at: gualaladowntown@dot.ca.gov. Those registering must say they want to attend the meeting; otherwise, it is understood that the person will not be able to attend and the new, online survey will not be sent.

TM reported that, acting as a private party, he sent a letter to GMAC, *CalTrans*, the *Mendocino County Supervisors*, *Mendocino Council of Governments*, *Mendocino County Planning and Building*, and the *California Coastal Commission* to forward the results of the *Save Gualala Petition* (see attached). Around 1,235 people signed the petition's questions. Of the 90 comments, about one-in-four don't want a GCAP project built at all. Most wanted the *Gualala Town Plan* followed with two lanes of traffic and one that could be used for turns or parking. None wanted two traffic lanes for driving and two for parking on either or both sides of the highway for the length of the town. The *Save Gualala* Facebook page and the *Save Gualala Petition* can be seen online. at: [Facebook.com/SaveGualala](https://www.facebook.com/SaveGualala) and [Change.org/SaveGualala](https://www.change.org/SaveGualala), respectively.

c. **Report: PSPS and Emergency Preparations Ad Hoc Committee:** (Hess): None.

d. **Report: Housing & Economic Development Standing Committee:** Relocation, Incubator Project (Murphy)

TM led an Incubator Committee, consisting of a six-person team, in developing a proposal to uplift the economy. They wrote a nine page proposal, which is presently under review, to help people start a business with a business plan tutorial and a twelve-week crash course for around ten people on understand the ins and outs of running a business. The project is designed to help all parts of the population, including Hispanic and Native populations, and sin-

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gle parents. Separately, there is a meeting 10 November from noon to 2 p.m. with Una Wikebau and *MOVE2030 (Mendocino Opportunities for a Vibrant Economy)* and they are asking community leaders to participate. TM said he would attend.

MOVE2030 is also working with Economic Developments staffs and realtors in Humboldt, Del Norte, Sonoma, Mendocino, and Marin counties to promote the idea of relocating Bay Area people into rural settings and North Coast communities. Many companies allow employees work from home now and they can do so from anywhere. Their moving to smaller, rural communities would help the economy of the area and perhaps upgrade the lifestyle of the worker, e.g., a country life of hiking, clean air, less traffic, open vistas, etc. Adding ten workers in Gualala at \$100,000 salary each would add \$1 million in spending to Gualala's economy, which would be re-circulated in the local economy, generating about \$4 million to \$5 million in spending annually.

On another item, Fort Bragg passed law restricting new chain stores in the city. Though Gualala has chain businesses in the area—the gas stations, and hardware stores—GMAC may want to take a position on this as well before other chain stores are proposed by perhaps sending a letter to County planners. GMAC should hear from the business community on this issue and then consider it.

e. **Report: Public Electric Vehicle Charging Station in Gualala Report:** (Hess)

DH hasn't heard from Free Wire and no funding has come from PG&E; all their funds were allocated elsewhere. He will pursue information on Electrify America via a VW grant. No one here wants to give up parking for a charging station at this time.

TM felt it was a complicated subject and should be taken one step at a time. He suggested contacting VW or Tesla; they want a way to charge their vehicles and need the infrastructure in rural areas. Let them do it with local landowners or merchants. Willits worked with VW and now has a fast charger in town. Hess said he would call the Willits City Manager to ask how it was accomplished.

Telecommunications Committee: YouTube Views, (Hess & Murphy)

TM reported the YouTube views for last month, 1 October, were 103; the CalTrans Street-scaping was the most popular item. No progress on Website design was made.

f. **Discussion: Water Ad Hoc Committee** (Hess & Juengling)

RJ reported they met this month to review the water situation. The area is seeing very low flows again this month: 1.65 CFS on the Gualala River North Fork. Water rationing may become the norm; rain is needed soon. Capturing water during rains to be used during draughts needs to be addressed. He is working on a letter to pertinent and appropriate agencies on the situation. We can't afford to let the river go extinct; addressing THPs, climate change, habitat, rationing, etc. needs to be done.

DH noted the availability of water for human consumption and habitat needs, and allowing THPs in flood zone and riparian areas will affect the amount and quality of the river's water. It's vital residents discuss limiting the potential damage this will impose in the present coastal climate and water conditions. We are dependent on rain and soil retention for summer water usage so, it's vital we protect the river and its habitat.

TM recalled a recent discussion about holding a half-day symposium/seminar/forum-type meeting on water issues with local, County, and State experts to present ideas and answer questions. Educate the community about the issues by inviting community members, environmental groups, State and County officials, and local business owners to speak.

DH agreed; his committee will discuss a timeline and what local experts, State Water Board Members, and/or ecologists to invite to a public meeting.

g. **Discussion: South Coast Volunteer Fire Department's New Boundary Map:** (Juengling)

RJ saw Chief Greg Warner and asked about the present District map. Greg has not received a new map from LAFCO (Local Agency Formation Commissions) or any other organization that was redrawing the boundaries. He will see Greg on Friday, 6 November and will ask for a copy of the three-year-old version, the only one available.

7. Administrator Mober's Report: Administrator Mober reported working 20.98 hours; materials were \$6.48, for a total of \$321.23. She reported on the voting turnout on Tuesday.

8. Vice-Chairman Murphy's Report:

TM reminded everyone the Gualala elections are staffed by great people. Leaders should respect

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the process and endorse the outcome. Because of the division in the county, remain calm and respect others. We'll get through this and democracy will prevail.

9. Chairman Juengling's Report:

RJ was also amazed at national election. After the holidays and New Year, he will contact 5th District Supervisor Williams about GMAC Membership and appointments to vacant seats.

10. Agenda: 3 December 2020: None

11. Adjournment:

It was moved by MF, seconded by TM, and unanimously carried to adjourn at 19:45.

DRAFT Minutes prepared by Administrator Moberg

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