

June Lake Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) September 2, 2020 – Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order by Chair John DeCoster at 6:01 p.m.; the Pledge of Allegiance was to a virtual flag. The meeting was held via ZOOM.

Other Members Present: Julie Brown, Jora Fogg, Janet Hunt, Bob Marks, David Rosky

2. Public Comment. None
3. Review/approve the minutes of the August 5, 2020 meeting. Julie moved adoption, and Janet seconded. The minutes were approved with one abstention.
4. Reports will follow agenda items 5, 6, and 7 to allow those attending and making reports to go first.
5. Update on Elections and Voting (Shannon Kendall and Sheereen Dedman from the County Registrar of Voters)

The topic was how the county would handle the balloting in the November 2020 general election, in particular the mail-in balloting adopted by the state. Ms. Dedman said there are 7600 registered voters in Mono county, and all will receive a postage-paid mail-in ballot beginning in early October; the mailing goes to all registered voters without the need to sign up to get it. Once that is received, a voter has several options for voting. (1) Return the ballot via mail, with the envelop properly signed. Ms. Dedman says the county has signatures on file and will check all those signatures. (2) Put the signed envelop in one of six ballot drop boxes in the county. Those locations are listed on the Registrar of Voters website. (3) Bring the mail-in ballot to the Registrar of Voters office. Voters who want to track their mailed ballot can follow it at “Where’s My Ballot,” again accessible on the county website. A voter needs to sign up for this service.

Registrar Kendall then explained that a voter still can go to an in-person polling station on election day to cast a ballot. Those will all be open and staffed. Following covid-19 guidelines, those entering will need to wear face coverings and socially distance. She emphasized that the polling places will be periodically cleaned so those entering can be assured it is as safe as can be.

She then made a very important point: those coming to vote in person MUST bring their mail-in vote to exchange for a printed ballot to ensure that each voter casts only one vote. Without that exchanged mail-in ballot, a voter likely would be able to cast a provisional vote. She also noted that mail-in ballots cannot be forwarded, so if you are planning to be away, you need to provide the Registrar with an address to which the ballot can be mailed directly. She concluded by saying that the safest way to vote is by mail: “Vote safe, vote at home.”

6. Follow-up on Suddenlink services.

Dave Rosky said he had been in contact with Suddenlink's Mike Horton (see the minutes of August 5), and also with a representative of Frontier as an alternative to Suddenlink for internet services. He had prepared a slide stack (see "Internet Access QOS Update," attached below). To summarize, Mr. Horton told Dave that they were working on the problems identified last month; Dave noted that there has been little to no improvement for users. That view was confirmed by many who were in attendance, and by reports to them by other residents.

Supervisor Gardner observed that the situation remained so bad that we might be getting to the point of assessing fines as laid out in the franchise agreement. A CAC member said that with school starting via remote learning, the situation was critical.

Much attention was given to the alternative provided by Frontier. Dave had contacted a Frontier service technician who phoned in to the ZOOM meeting. Frontier has recently increased their internet capacity in June Lake with two new nodes, one in the Village and one across from Double Eagle. Internet is brought to those nodes by fiber optic cables, and then via ADSL (asymmetric digital subscriber line) twisted pair copper lines to users. Within 5000' feet of the nodes, speeds reach 100 mbs; beyond that to 8000' from the node speeds are slower (see the last slide in Dave's presentation).

A CAC member reported that using Suddenlink the T-Bar had been having extreme difficulty streaming music performances in preparation for the upcoming virtual "June Lake Jam Fest." They switched to Frontier, and while the speed was slower, the connection was stable and they proceeded without incident.

Because of the newness of the service, the Frontier service tech said there were some glitches in signing up, but that he would get that information to Dave.

7. Introduction and Update from the June Lake PUD (Public Utility District).

The new general manager, Paul Stiglich, introduced himself and said he would answer questions. One set concerned the number of employees (6), whether the PUD was audited, and if concerns were noted in the audit. Mr. Stiglich said the 2019 audit had been completed, and that the concern was that the PUD had not used fund accounting methods (a common method used by not-for-profit organizations and governments that do not account for profitability). That has been addressed by using new software. Another question concerned the fiscal condition of the PUD. Mr. Stiglich said the auditor addressed that question and found the financial condition sound and that it was operational via water and waste water rates that had been recently increased. In response to another question, he said the PUD did have \$2m in cash reserves derived from bond issues.

Responding to questions about challenges and priorities, Mr. Stiglich said that some water pipes were 50 years old, and that the waste treatment plant was 50 years old; both

needed upgrading at projected costs in the \$6+m range. Long-term maintenance issues, in particular on the two pumping stations, would add \$1m each over the next decade. In response to another question, he said that barring any prolonged drought the PUD had sufficient water resources to meet future growth needs in the June Lake loop. The 2007 Master Water Plan needed to be updated.

The Board of Directors consists of five members, with three currently vacant. The August 7 filing date has passed, so any new Board members would be appointed by the Board members following an interview process. Supervisor Gardner later added that he thought that the appointments would be made by the Board of Supervisors, and that he would check and get back to Mr. Stiglich on that process. A member of the community asked if the Board meetings could be moved from mid-mornings on Wednesday to a later time so someone who works might be able to take a board position. Mr. Stiglich said the Board could change the meeting time.

Supervisor Gardner asked if there had been any discussion between the PUD and June Mountain regarding its water needs for snow making. Julie Brown said she attended the July PUD meeting to discuss water and a more competitive water rate for June Mountain. A lower water rate will require an ordinance for approval, as well as an engineering contract. The process is moving forward.

On behalf of the CAC, John DeCoster welcomed Mr. Stiglich to the community, and invited him to attend CAC meetings to discuss water issues.

8. Discussion and updates on COVID-19 impacts and response

Supervisor Gardner reported that under the state's new four-tier scheme, Mono County is in tier 3 "moderate risk." Hair salons can now reopen inside, and indoor dining at 50% occupancy is now allowed. Details are on the county website. He also relayed the County Department call to be especially careful over Labor Day weekend. There are currently no hospitalizations. A citizen commented that he hoped the County health officer would not issue rules that are more restrictive than the state requires. Supervisor Gardner observed that we will need to keep the numbers of cases down so he won't have to do that.

9. Reports

- a. Supervisor Gardner reported (1) that Board of Supervisors began discussing the Highlands short-term rentals proposal, but needs more time and information before acting, which he will provide; (2) the Census is important! At 25%, Mono County is at the bottom of the list of counties in terms of response rate; (3) SCE continues working on the Gem lake safety valve upgrade, and expects there to be 200-300 more helicopter flights over the next two months. Complaints about flying over houses should be sent to Supervisor Gardner who will contact SCE. SCE will be replacing electric poles as well. Wendy expressed concern about the visual impact; apparently SCE is doing as good a job as possible with designs that fit into the background; and

- (4) the Peterson tract road snow plowing and repair issues are moving forward with the creation of an advisory committee.
- b. Chair DeCoster offered a non-partisan plea to vote.
 - c. CAC Members
 - Julie Brown appreciated the discussion with the PUD on water issues.
 - Jora noted that unsecured dumpsters in the Village and Gull Lake park can attract bears.
 - Janet noted that the Chamber is monitoring the porta-potties and dumpsters. The Mono County Arts Council is going forward with a virtual Jam Band Festival in the hopes of raising some money fund the arts in Mono county, including school programs.
 - d. Mono County staff.
 - i. Michael Draper reported that (a) the June Lake Highlands project with a limit of 27 parcels (39%) in the Highlands being allowed to offer short-term vacation rentals will return to the Board of Supervisors for further consideration; and (b) the amended Don Morton mixed-use project approval process was moving forward with a CEQA report pending.
 - ii. Wendy Sugimura reported that the Cal Trans district 9 active transportation plan is being formulated. The intent is to develop projects connecting walking, biking, etc. to public transportation. Although perhaps not as relevant to rural areas, Bridgeport did redo its main street, and Lee Vining is considering doing something similar, pending the outcome of the Tioga Inn proposed project. Wendy said there will be opportunities for public input. Jora said we need to think about June Lake, and that she would do some initial work and bring that to the CAC.

10. Community updates

- a. Women's Club. Janet Hunt said that June Lake Cares remains their top priority.
- b. Chamber of Commerce. Janet reported that the Chamber contracted to have two dumpsters and five porta-potties placed in the Village. Chamber members are monitoring (and cleaning and restocking, as necessary) until they are removed after Labor Day as the number of visitors is expected to drop off. The annual meeting is coming up with board elections.
- c. Water Subcommittee. Covered above in the PUD discussion.

11. Future agenda items: Suddenlink; Balance Rock beautification.

12. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Next meeting: TBA

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Marks, Secretary

09/02/2020

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Sept. 1 update from Mike Horton

- Completed work:
- Determined system noise to be an issue
- Repairs to address noise issues:
 - Clean connectors
 - Remove unconnected service lines
 - Repaired some cable segments
 - Tuned network amplifiers
- Repairs to date have brought modest improvements in measured network parameters (not the same thing as end user results)

- Near-term remaining work:
 - Service group split for the two June Lake nodes (remapping bandwidth without adding nodes to optimize for current usage). This is expected to have a bigger effect than previous work.
 - Longer-term remaining work:
 - Physical node splits (adding nodes)
 - Additional equipment maintenance as necessary

- Current observed results from partial work to date:
 - May be some small improvements but people are still experiencing numerous outages and modem resets.
 - Followup:
 - Mike will continue to follow up by email and will return to a CAC meeting when the near-term work is finished.

- Frontier provides some service in June Lake
 - Lower maximum service speeds than Suddenlink (up to ~100Mb/s)
 - One node in town and one down-canyon (across from Double Eagle)
 - Down-canyon node only has two internet users out of a capacity of 150
 - Problem with their internal records prevents down-canyon users from ordering online. Should be fixed soon.

