



COUNTY OF LAKE

Board of Supervisors

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PRESS RELEASE **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

County Insights: Health and Well-Being at the Fore, Consumer Protections in Place, and a Special Board Meeting 3/31

LAKE COUNTY, CA (March 24, 2020) – With COVID-19 continuing to command the attention of people around the globe, and all Californians under the Governor’s Order to Shelter-in-Place unless engaging in Essential Activities, the Lake County Board of Supervisors came together to take action to protect the public and the County workforce.

Board Chair Moke Simon offered some comments following a meeting that saw the Board acting with care, concern, creativity, and resolve.

“First, I have to reinforce how important it is that people comply with recommendations of our Public Health Officials,” urged Simon. “As the Governor said, we need to abide by a Social Contract, and do what we’ve been asked to do. I understand the way this is affecting the economy.”

“Dr. Pace and the Health Services team are doing everything they can, and their recommendations [reflect] the threat we’re facing. If we look at the [infection rates] seen in other areas, and think about the fact Dr. Pace said we only have 11 ventilators in Lake County, this is serious. If we don’t act on the Health Officers’ decisions now, some of us may lose family members. I don’t want [us all] to be sitting here, thinking about the things we didn’t do.”

Encouraging compliance with the statewide Shelter-in-Place order, the Board acted by Urgency Ordinance to prevent Rental Housing Price Gouging. District 5 Supervisor, Rob Brown, who has been active in meeting the COVID-19-related needs of residents and business owners, alike, sponsored the item:

“This is something Rob has brought forward in other times of disaster, [enabling] fines of up to \$20,000 under [Penal Code section 396],” noted Simon. “This doesn’t change the obligation of people to pay their rent, but these are very difficult times, and no one should be taking advantage. The fine reflects the seriousness taking away someone’s housing for the wrong reasons at a time like this. Our Board was unanimous.”

A temporary remote work policy was adopted, and the Board directed an Ad Hoc Committee to work with County staff to dig deeply into what County workers are in essential functions that cannot be worked remotely, and take steps available to limit the threat of COVID 19 spread by getting as many people working from home as possible.

“We have to keep our workforce safe, particularly since County departments are responding to basic needs for some of the most vulnerable people,” stated Simon. “That

means understanding what tools are available at the Federal and State levels, and aligning our policies so people can stay home if they need to stay home. We also have departments like Health Services that need help right now. If staff can be made available from other departments to back them up, we're gonna take a look at that."

The Board also affirmed the need to explore every option where it comes to providing housing support to those in quarantine due to COVID-19:

"Our Public Services staff has already been doing some retrofits to a County-owned facility, to prepare for the potential need to quarantine," affirmed Simon, "and there is money available at the State level. Social Services and Behavioral Health staff and others are working on it, too, and we appreciate that work."

A Board Proclamation celebrating National Agriculture Day was delayed, to a date uncertain:

"Our Agricultural community is a major contributor to our local economy," stated Simon, "and Ag workers and business owners are core to our communities. We will wholeheartedly celebrate all they mean to Lake County once we get through this crisis."

The Board also authorized a Special Meeting, to take place next Tuesday, March 31. Next week's Special Meeting will be more fully virtual:

"Anyone interested in providing real-time input during the meeting should write the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors, publiccomment@lakecountyca.gov, to schedule Zoom access," encouraged Simon. "We also had some great comments today by email, and that's how we're going to do things moving forward [through the COVID-19 pandemic]."

Written comments on any agenda item sent to publiccomment@lakecountyca.gov by Monday, 3/30, at 5pm, will be included in the public record. Please note the item number addressed by any written comment.

Video of all Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission meetings will still be accessible through the County website and Lake County PEG TV (TV8). Agendas and live and archived video are available at:

<https://countyoflake.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Lake County-focused COVID-19 information is accessible through the County's homepage, <http://www.lakecountyca.gov/>, and at <http://health.co.lake.ca.us/>.

If you have public health-related questions about COVID-19, please direct them to MHOAC@lakecountyca.gov, or call Public Health's COVID-19 line, at 707-263-8174.