The Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma met this date in adjourned session with the following members present: Susan Gorin, David Rabbitt, Shirlee Zane, James Gore, Efren Carrillo

Chair Susan Gorin presiding.

Present: Veronica A. Ferguson, County Administrator
         Bruce Goldstein, County Counsel

I. Call to Order
   9:14 a.m. Chair Gorin called the meeting to order.

II. Pledge of Allegiance
    9:14 a.m.

III. Approval of the Agenda
     9:16 a.m.

IV. Public comment on matters not listed on the agenda
    9:19 a.m. Public comment opened

    Jeff Tyler
    Sam McHenry
    Craig Harrison
    Dawna Gallagher
    Kathy Pons
    Ken Uboldi

    9:31 a.m. Public comment closed

V. Board Study Session

County Administrator Veronica Ferguson reviewed the provided materials, including the 2014 Sonoma County Board of Supervisors Priorities, 2014 Ad-Hoc Committees, and Sonoma County Strategic Plan, adopted May 2011.
Grant Davis, Sonoma County Water Agency Director, and Department and Agency Head President, gave an overview of the results of the December, 2014 Department and Agency Head Workshop strategic priorities.

Chris Thomas, Assistant County Administrator, also provided further background information into the four Department and Agency Head initiatives.

Christina Rivera, Deputy County Administrator, reviewed the listed on unmet needs. Unmet needs are listed as resources, and they become available for Board priorities after the budget is balanced. This information will be updated the next time it proceeds to the Board.

The Board recessed: 9:57 a.m.
The Board reconvened: 10:05 a.m.

The Board viewed two TED talks featuring challenges from the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro and Steve Jobs’ transition into Apple.

County Administrator Ferguson led the Board in a discussion to identify the top 2015 Board goals and objectives. She started with an examination of the Board’s internal and external challenges.

Challenges

- Funding limitations
- Board doesn’t have the bandwidth to focus on 38 priorities
- Need for housing, vacation rentals versus workforce housing
- Competing priorities
- Time constraints
- Limited resources
- Limited human resources, and invest in people (Internships)
- Prioritize constituent issues (Vocal minorities may not represent the majority of constituents)
- Recognize other constituent voices who aren’t at meetings, and look at the broader picture of what’s in the best interests of the County
- Synthesize programs with many needs (Pensions)
- Integrate resource management
- Sharing District issues, but respecting the designated Supervisor
- Supervisor alignment and coordination
- Respect the differences in each District
- Communications – People do not know what the County does
- Civic engagement
- Messaging
- Collaborating on issues
- Perceived divisiveness
- Fragile fiscal system
- Deteriorating infrastructure
- Many of the same challenges remain year after year
• Shrinking of the middle class
• Broken immigration system
• Immigration system changes can serve more constituents (Registrar of Voters, Health & Human Services)
• Municipal government expected to do more (Education, Sonoma Clean Power, Upstream investments)
• Public trust working on initiatives (engaging public partners to achieve goals)
• Create better government models
• Santa Rosa-centric issues
• City issues overlap, get information from other City meetings
• Communications, speaking as individuals and not a Board
• Communications from City partners, who also have limited resources
• Better ways to meet with our partners and communities
• Services in both unincorporated and incorporated areas
• Relationship between unincorporated areas and the Cities
• Developing livable communities, identify community centers
• Homeless issues, and finding successful efforts
• Fire
• Water
• Finding how each initiative enhances the quality of life for citizens
• Finding regional solutions to challenges
• Turning “either/or” into “and”

The Board recessed: 11:09 a.m.
The Board reconvened: 11:26 p.m.

County Administrator Ferguson led the Board in a discussion regarding opportunities before the Board.

Opportunities

• Economic recovery
• Facilitate and convene to bring different groups together
• Successful collaborations and achievements
• Added staffing
• Forums (Immigration, health)
• Help communities on the fringe
• Examine Regional Park and coastal commission fees
• Universal preschool and early childhood education, and their facilities
• Affordable housing
• Cap and trade
• Land use regulations
• County health care plan costs and access (Affordable Care Act)
• Work with cities on land use decisions
• Housing opportunities (Habitat for humanity, rent control, affordable housing)
• Investments with County properties to inject funds
• Collaborate with labor, environmental groups, North Bay council, on housing and community resources
• Summits on housing, health care issues, conservation, water issues, sustainability, land use, resource management, federal funds and matching grants available for these efforts
• Water
• Vacation rental homes
• DAHA initiatives

The Board recessed: 12:21 p.m.
The Board reconvened: 12:48 pm

County Administrator Ferguson led the Board in a discussion about the allocation of resources, and a discussion about top Board priorities. Supervisor Gorin shared that many of the priorities can stay with the designated Board liaisons.

Priorities

• Ongoing education investments
• Building affordable housing
• Affordable care act
• Access to good health care and health care initiatives
• Bring together health care programs, including senior needs and behavioral health
• Meet with City partners, Mayors, City Managers, in both incorporated and unincorporated, and learn their perspectives to find regional solutions
• Community healing efforts, (body worn cameras)
• Homelessness issues and housing
• Tiered system to open lands for full public access, working with APOSD
• Sustainability
• Latino outreach with civic engagement
• Fiscal responsibility
• Road tax and the general tax measure
• Pensions
• Board collaboration
• Streamlining the permit process
• Delivering services for residents
• Water and drought
• Roseland annexation
• Cities, unincorporated areas, towns, villages, and County working together
• Investments the future, and build upon successes
• Livable communities
• Universal preschool
• County wide council of governments to exchange ideas better communicate (tribal, ground water, flood control)
• PRMD seismic safety ordinance
• Poultry processing and USDA slaughterhouse issues
• SMART needs for parking and transportation and freeway issues
• JPAs for shared service agreements
• Fire infrastructure funding
• Task force recommendations with respectful dialogue
• Voter confidence in government

The Board had a discussion about their Ad hoc committees. Chair Gorin will announce the ad hoc committee assignments at a future Board meeting.

County Administrator Ferguson reviewed Board Meeting efficiencies and effectiveness with the Board, including adjournments, ex parte disclosures, public comments, announcements, consent calendar comments, meeting tempo, fee waivers and sponsorships, procedures for closed session meetings, special meetings held in Districts, delegating work to staff, and afternoon session procedures.

County Counsel Goldstein gave the Board a legal issue update, and a review on ballot measure activities and public agency resources.

V. Adjourn

3:33 p.m. The Board adjourned the meeting to February 3, 2015 at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Epstein
Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board