

County CEO's Management By Intimidation Spurs Department Head Exodus

By Mark Gutglueck

Leonard Hernandez, whose tenure as San Bernardino County's chief executive officer started out with so much promise, at least for him, has lost considerable traction in recent months as he has fallen victim to his own vaunting ambition and the ruthless formula he had previously so successfully utilized in seeking to fulfill it.

As little as a year ago, the smart money was



Leonard Hernandez

that Hernandez, who was selected in September 2020 and officially hired the following month to replace Gary

McBride, his predecessor as the county's chief executive officer, was on a trajectory to last another decade-and-a-half in the county's top staff position.

In recent months, however, he and the county have encountered some rough sledding that is threatening to dislodge him from the pinnacle of government in the nation's largest geographical county outside of Alaska.

San Bernardino County, more than most of its 57 counterparts throughout the Golden State, has had unfortunate experiences with several of its top administrators.

Two of them, Harry Mays and his protégé James Hlawek, ended up in prison after the exposure of bribetaking schemes they hatched to enrich themselves by committing the county to contracts with ven-

dors and service providers which cost taxpayers millions of dollars more than would have been the case if those contracts had been honestly bid upon rather than going to companies whose corporate officers were willing to pay to grease the way for their companies to profit.

Another, Robert Covington, brought himself and the county into disrepute when he bootlegged 22 lots **See P 2**

Land Swap Between USFS & San Manuel Would Give Tribe Choke Point Control Of Region's Water Supply

By Anthony Serrano & Mark Gutglueck

After discussions that have gone on for more than four years, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, now known as the Yuhaaviatam Nation, is on the brink of swapping seven parcels consisting of 1,533.92 acres it owns in the San Bernardino National Forest at various altitudes ranging from approximately 5,200 feet to 7,000 feet in the San Bernardino Mountains for two parcels of federal land consisting of 1,475.90 acres located near the Arrowhead Springs Hotel at the approximate 2,000 foot elevation in the San Bernardino Mountain foothills.

The land the tribe will acquire under the agreement lies at a crucial juncture in the foothills above the San Bernardino and Highland city limits, from which it could divert to its own use much of the Inland Region's water resources.

According to Dave Anderson, the special uses and lands program manager for the San Bernardino National Forest, "The tribe initially approached the forest with a proposal for the land exchange. At some time before 2019 the tribe was advised by the Forest Service to first acquire (or acquire the option to purchase) properties that had previously been identified by the United States Forest Service as high-value parcels with respect to location and resources **See P 5**

IEUA Board Spurns Request To Hold The Line On Managerial Salary Increases

On a 4-to-1 vote this week, the board of the embattled Inland Empire Utilities Agency gave its general manager a salary increase of more than 9 percent, raising the ire and concern of a large cross section of the community and public served by the regional service entity.

As a result of the action, Shivaji Deshmukh will see his salary

jump from \$311,428 to \$340,000, and his total annual compensation, when his annual cost of living adjustment is factored in, go from \$420,853.80 to \$462,908.57.

At issue in the board's favorable treatment of Deshmukh is not only pointed disagreements within the community about his performance and the direction of the

Inland Empire Utilities Agency, but growing public dismay over the reflexive granting of raises to public employees in general and the management echelon among public employees specifically, creating a widening gulf between the remuneration levels of public and private sector workers.

On display in the matter was the seeming

nonchalance of the four members of the utility agency board who supported Deshmukh's pay increase and the expression of alarm made by the single board member who took a stand against it.

The Inland Empire Utilities Agency has been in existence since its founding on June 6, 1950 as a municipal corporation, then known as

the Chino Basin Municipal Water District. Having undergone rebranding as the Inland Empire Utilities Agency, it now takes as its charter treating wastewater and recycling water, converting biosolids and other refuse into compost and generating electrical energy from renewable sources.

While there is little opposition to **See P 4**

Grandson Identified As A Fugitive Suspect In Ramirez Slayings

WEST END, February 17, 2023 –The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department late today identified the grandson of George and Sonia Ramirez as their likely killer.

George Ramirez, 72, his wife, Sonia Ramirez, 68, and their son, David Renteria, 43, were found dead in the home they lived in on an otherwise

usually quiet cul-de-sac in the unincorporated San Bernardino County West End district shortly after 9 p.m. on January 30.

George, a retired carpenter, woodworker and furniture maker, and Sonia were the progenitors of a large family and had lived for some time in the 1,350-square foot, two-story **See P 3**

Needles City Manager Says General Plan, Updated Now After 37 Years, Has More Realistic Projections

The City of Needles is updating its general plan that has been in place for nearly 37 years.

San Bernardino County's easternmost city and smallest municipality population-wise with 5,225 residents, the town has been in existence since 1883, when it was selected as the California side of the bridge constructed by

the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway to bring the railroad across the Colorado River from Arizona.

The seventh city in San Bernardino County to incorporate in 1913, Needles from the 1920s through the 1960s was a major stop on Route 66, what was then the primary highway from Chicago to Los Ange-

les. From the 1970s until quite recently, Needles' population was in decline, reaching its nadir within the last decade. In 2014, the city's last supermarket, Bashas, a chain store run by an Arizona company, was shuttered. Virtually all of the commercial establishments that once existed in the city, its dime stores, 1920s- **See P 7**

Wonder Valley Resort Development Proposal Contains Hidden Residential Component

A resort project proposed for development on just over 21 acres at the corner of Amboy Road and Gammel Road in Wonder Valley is to be augmented with a residential component on the surrounding 138.78 acres, one of the principals in the undertaking told the *Sentinel* this week.

In November 2021, Alan Greenberg and Ja-

son Landver applied for a conditional use permit, including a rezoning request, for the majority of 21.22 acres on the corner lot site in the remote desert community which are currently zoned for low density housing. The 3.18 acres closest to the two roads is already zoned for commercial service use, while the remaining 18.4 acres bear the county's

RL-5 zoning designation. The request is to designate all 21.22 acres as suitable for commercial service use, or CS in the county's zoning parlance. The current RL-5 designation allows single family homes on lots no smaller than five acres. Greenberg and Landver have acquired 160 acres at the Amboy/Gammel corner location.

Since even before

Greenberg and his consultant David Mlynarski previewed the proposal to the Wonder Valley community in May 2021, a growing number of locals have raised objections to the character and scope of the project. Meanwhile, the San Bernardino County Land Use Services Department has proceeded with its processing of Greenberg and Landver's ap-

plication and appears purposed to allow the project to proceed, subject to what many locals consider to be an inadequate environmental certification.

Because Greenberg & Landver acquired 160 acres in Wonder Valley, far more land than the 21.22 acres upon which the Wonder Valley Inn is to be constructed, rumors and re- **See P 3**

Over The Decades, San Bernardino County Has Had A Mix Of Top Administrators, Some Very Capable, Some Ineffective, Some Crooked, Some Unassuming, Some Domineering *from front page*

on 80 acres in a dry lake in Apple Valley under his mother's name, selling them at an inflated cost to unsuspecting buyers intent on building homes there.

In some other cases, the board of supervisors hired individuals to lead the county whose suitability for the posts fell under question after it was learned that they did not possess the skills their political masters had imputed to them. In a handful of others, personality differences with those elected officials who put them into their managerial positions manifested.

Hernandez, who is now 42, has spent close to 24 years employed in government, although initially he worked in an arena in which his migration into a senior management position seemed highly unlikely. Eight years ago, however, he began a meteoric rise that culminated in his becoming not only one of the youngest senior administrators in county history but also one of the most feared. His presence still carries with it that specter of intimidation, though it now turns out that he might have sliced himself with the sword he wielded so powerfully to cut others off at the knees.

In 1998, the then-20-year-old Hernandez obtained a part-time job as a library assistant at the Chino Branch Library while he was attending Cal State Fullerton while pursuing a bachelor's degree in history. Upon graduating from college, he obtained a full-time position at the James S. Thalman Chino Hills Branch Library, where he worked for four years. It was there that he discovered what he at that time figured was his

calling, being a librarian.

He enrolled at Pennsylvania's Clarion University, which offered an online learning program by which he was able to earn his Master of Science degree in library science. He immediately parlayed that into a promotion within the San Bernardino County Library System, becoming the manager of the Fontana Branch Library.

In 2008, when a position as the director of libraries with City of Riverside opened up, he jumped at the chance.

In 2010 he applied for and was offered the executive director's position with the Tumwater, Washington-based Timberland Regional Library System, which features 25 libraries located in a geographically dispersed section of north-west Washington, but ultimately declined the offer after learning that San Bernardino County Librarian Ed Kieczkowski was leaning toward retirement. At that point, he returned to San Bernardino County as the county's assistant librarian. In 2011, upon Kieczkowski's departure, Hernandez moved into the position of San Bernardino County librarian. In 2013, he was offered, while he was simultaneously serving in the librarian post, a secondary position as the director of the San Bernardino County Museum.

In 2015, while Greg Devereaux was the county's chief executive officer, Hernandez was promoted to the position of county deputy executive officer overseeing the community services group, which includes the county's library and museum systems, the registrar of voters, regional parks, county airports and the county department of agriculture/weights and measures.

Devereaux was arguably the most dynamic top county administrator in San Bernardino County history. A transplanted West Virginian who had been that state's minister/director of culture overseeing the West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture

and History, which operated the West Virginia State Museum, the West Virginia Independence Hall, Camp Washington-Carver, the Grave Creek Archaeological Complex and the West Virginia State Museum Educational Foundation, Devereaux came to California for the opportunity it offered more than 35 years ago. After working in Orange County, he came to San Bernardino County first as the director of housing and economic development in Fontana. Three years later, he was hired as the city manager there.

After a three-year stint in that position in which he was credited with arresting and then reversing what had



Greg Devereaux

looked to be the former steel town's steady progression toward bankruptcy, he was offered the city manager's position in Ontario in 1997. He served in that role for more than twelve years, during which time the city made progress by leaps and bounds, with the success of the Ontario Mills mall, the steady expansion of Ontario International Airport and Devereaux's shrewd and savvy courting of a number of corporations features of his tenure there. By persuading major-scale companies to set up their corporate headquarters in Ontario, the city reaped the benefit of becoming the "point of sale" for those companies' business activity and sales throughout California, which made Ontario the recipient of the sales tax paid by those companies' customers. By 2010, Ontario was the wealthiest of the 24 municipalities in San Bernardino County, with more than two-thirds of a billion dollars running through all of its municipal accounts, more than double that of its closest

competitor, Rancho Cucamonga.

In 2010, former Ontario Mayor Gary Ovitt was serving as both Fourth District San Bernardino County supervisor and board chairman, and he persuaded his board colleagues to hire Devereaux as the county's top administrator when the board grew disenchanted with Mark Uffer, the one-time director of the county hospital who had been serving for more than five years in the capacity of what was then titled the county administrative officer. Devereaux agreed to leave Ontario and come aboard with the county, but only after he negotiated a substantially higher salary than what he was being paid in Ontario and what the county was paying Uffer, along with a so-called "super bonus," which consisted of an up-until-that-point nonexistent margin of job security for the person holding the position consisting of a contractual assurance that he could not be terminated on a simple 3-to-2 majority vote of the board of supervisors and could be fired only upon a vote of at least 4-to-1 to end his status as the county's top dog. In addition, the county changed the title of the position that he held from that of "county administrative officer" as had been the case with Uffer and those who headed the county previously to the job description of "county chief executive officer."

Written into Devereaux's contract as well were provisions that gave him a greater degree of authority than had been the case with his predecessors, such that it was put in writing and cast in cement that he was to be answerable only to the board of supervisors as a whole such that no single member of the board or no two members of the board had the authority to direct policy or order action and he was to be given his orders from the board in action taken publicly during an agendaized meeting of the board which was imposed by a vote

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of no fewer than three of the board's members. He was thus given full authority – or near full authority – to operate the county and execute policy approved by the board majority in a way he deemed best and most efficient, subject only to the limitations of the policy dictates of the collective board. He was given a guaranteed ten-year contract that called for him being switched into a management consultant position if his status as chief executive officer were to be terminated at any time during that decade.

For more than four years, despite the consideration that he had come to his position with the county in the midst of the severe economic downturn that had begun with the contraction of the national, state and local economy in late 2007 and which persisted for six years to become identified as the "great recession," Devereaux remained in his element as he guided the county with aplomb, even as tax revenues and funding for governments of all sizes shrank, necessitating layoffs and severe belt-tightening among local governments in particular, but which the county for the most part evaded by his ability to wring concessions from the county employees' collective bargaining units despite existing contracts. It appeared that Devereaux would serve out the ten years on his contract and, after the county, state and local economy snapped out of the funk that had engulfed them for more

than five years, his contract would be renewed and he, the supervisors, the county and the world at large would have an opportunity to see how he would perform in a fully functional financial environment.

In 2014, however, Curt Hagman, who had been a councilman and mayor in Chino Hills in the early and mid 2000s and then was elected to the California Assembly in 2008, was about to be termed out of his station in the state legislature after three two-year terms as a consequence of the term limits that were then in effect. An A-type personality, Hagman in 2013 had deposed Robert Rego as the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee chairman after Rego had reestablished the central committee as a formidable political fundraising machine. Hagman then used his control of the local GOP electioneering apparatus to intimidate Gary Ovitt, a fellow Republican, out of seeking reelection as the Fourth District San Bernardino County supervisor representing Carbon Canyon, Los Serranos, Chino Hills, Chino, West End, Montclair and Ontario, Guasti and lower Upland. Hagman ran as the primary Republican candidate for the Fourth District supervisorial post in 2014, emerging victorious after he and his political associate, West Covina Mayor Mike Spence, who was also Hagman's campaign manager and chief of staff as assemblyman and later as su-

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Two Developers Seeking To Locate High End Resort In Remote Wonder Valley *from front page*

ports abounded that the duo's undertaking was more energetic and further-reaching than the 106-room hotel and accompanying facilities.

The prospect that the contemplated land use at the confluence of paved Amboy Road and unpaved Gammel Road would confine itself to the resort apparently led the San Bernardino County Department of Land Use Services and the two staff members who are processing Greenberg & Landver's application, Senior Planner Azhar Khan and Supervising Planner Chris Warrick, to conclude that a mitigated negative declaration for the project would suffice. Landver's acknowledgment that he and Goldberg intend to proceed with a project or

combination of projects entailing nearly eight times as much land as was previously indicated throws into doubt whether Greenberg & Landver can proceed with the project by carrying out an environmental certification on the cheap.

On January 13, 2023, the San Bernardino County Department of Land Use Services released its initial study of the project, indicating it would accept a negative mitigation declaration in carrying out the environmental certification of the project during its approval process.

Under the California Environmental Quality Act, most development projects are subjected to an environmental certification process. Some types of environmental certification are more intensive than others, ranging from an environmental impact report to an environmental assessment to an environmental ex-

amination to a mitigated negative declaration to a negative declaration.

An environmental impact report, the most involved type of environmental analysis and certification there is, consists of an in-depth study of the project site, the project proposal, the potential and actual impacts the project will have on the site and surrounding area in terms of all conceivable issues, including land use, water use, air quality, potential contamination, noise, traffic, and biological and cultural resources. An environmental impact report specifies in detail what measures can, will and must be carried out to offset those impacts. A mitigated negative declaration falls near the other end of the scale, and exists as a far less exacting size-up of the impacts of a project, by which the panel entrusted with the jurisdiction's ultimate land use authority, as in the case of Wonder Valley either the county

planning commission or the board of supervisors, issues a declaration that all adverse environmental impacts from the project will be mitigated, or offset, by the conditions of approval of the project imposed upon the developer.

Neither Khan, the staff member with the San Bernardino County Department of Land Use Services processing the development application, nor Chris Warrick, the supervising planner overseeing Khan, were aware of Greenberg's and Landver's intentions of following through with the development of the remaining acreage they had acquired beyond that slated for development as a hotel/resort. While many Wonder Valley residents have already contended that the mitigated negative declaration was insufficient to catalog the impacts that will arise out of the resort development, the acknowledgment that the develop-

ment of the property will entail significantly more building and alteration of the desert than was heretofore known is likely to force Khan, Warrick and the county to accede to the requests of nearby residents that a far more thorough effort at cataloging the impacts of the projects and the mitigations necessary to offset them be carried out.

Landver is the chief marketing officer of the Palari Group, which touts itself as "a vertically integrated company with in-house development, construction, asset management, sales and technology divisions" that functions as "a technology-driven developer of sustainable communities" utilizing "3D printing, panelized steel, and prefabrication to build better, faster and greener communities and homes of the future."

Landver celebrated the Wonder Valley Inn as an addition to the community that "will promote international

tourism" by providing "a place for those who have come to the national park to rest their heads. There are only three motels in Joshua Tree. Those are motels and not hotels. This will give them an opportunity to have nice accommodations, a place for them to stay at night."

The resort, he insisted, will be "ecologically friendly and self-contained, an eco-reserve that will confine itself to zero use of energy. We want to make it completely self-sustained. Electricity will be provided by solar panels. There are wells on the property. We will be re-using water, recycling the gray water to irrigate the plants. We want to make it sustainable. I am part of the younger generation, and I want the desert and Planet Earth to be around for my grandchildren, to not suck the resources from the land. We have learned from the mistakes of the past. We are not going to be

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Suspected Killer Of His Grandparents & Uncle Is A Paranoid Schizophrenic With An Affinity For Guns *from front page*

three-bedroom house located at 4804 Ramona Place in the unincorporated county area north of Chino, south of Montclair, west of Ontario and east of Pomona and the Los Angeles County line.

Deputies working out of the Chino Hills Sheriff's Station, which is roughly 6.4 miles from the home, were dispatched to the scene at 9:09 p.m. by an unidentified individual, believed to be one of the three other residents of the house, who came upon the bodies shortly before the call was made.

The first deputy arrived on the scene after a driving time of about 11 minutes, followed by his colleagues and ultimately a team of detectives. A preliminary investigation was begun, which determined that the three had been killed by

gunfire. That probe intensified after dawn the following morning, with neighbors contacted by a team of homicide investigators. Some nearby residents said they heard what they thought were fireworks going off earlier in the evening of



George Ramirez

January 30. Owners of three of the homes immediately adjacent to the Ramirez residence submitted to consensual searches of their yards and property.

Initially, investigators theorized that the killings might have been gang related. Though 4804 Ramona Place falls within an unincorporated county district, properties there bear Ontario mailing addresses, as the Ontario Post Office provides mail delivery to that area. Located as it is between Pomona and

Ontario and just north of Chino, the West End, which remained an agricultural zone even as portions of it were converted to single family residential properties in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and saw both Chino and Montclair engage in annexations that contracted its borders, over the years has been considered disputed turf between the Pomona 9th Street, the Chino Sinners and the Ontario Black Angels gangs.

Nevertheless, from the outset there was an indication that the violence that befell the Ramirezes and Renteria originated much closer to home.

As of mid-morning on January 31, Pete Anthony Renteria, 29, who was said to be the grandson of George and Sonia Ramirez, the nephew of David Renteria and one of the five occupants of the residence, had not returned to the location, at which point he was determined to be a person of interest in the investigation.

Investigators quickly

learned that he had been charged on February 25, 2012 with a violation of Penal Code § 246.3(A)-F: discharge of a firearm with gross negligence in the City of Fontana, for which he had been convicted and served 487 days confinement and



Sonia Ramirez

that he was charged on December 7, 2013 with another felony, Penal Code § 246-F: shooting at an inhabited dwelling/vehicle/etc. in the City of Upland. He was convicted in that case and sentenced to three years in state prison.

In 2020, Renteria was again charged on May 7 of that year with another felony, a violation of Penal Code § 29800(A)(1)-F: being a felon in possession of a firearm, and was convicted 19 days later, on May 26, 2020, of that charge. He was

sentenced to 16 months in prison with the proviso that he would have to serve half that time.

Investigators would learn that Pete Renteria had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and that he was in a constant state of fear based upon both real and imagined circumstances in his life. He had, on occasion, evinced or expressed a fear of members of his own family. For that reason, he had armed himself on multiple occasions in the past.

Pete Renteria's bouts of paranoia had been controlled in the past by the administration of anti-psychotic medication.

In the course of his brushes with the law, he had also been arrested and convicted of use of or being under the influence of a controlled substance and had failed to make several court appearances. He was also charged with a violation of community supervision and the terms of his past probation. He had been subject to a court order in 2016 that he participate in a domestic violence counseling and

educational program.

During the searches carried out the morning of January 31, a handgun was found in the yard of a house immediately adjacent to the Ramirez residence. The sheriff's department has not said whether ballistics tests



Pete Renteria

on that gun match up to the bullets that killed the Ramirezes and David Renteria, nor whether the gun could be tied to Pete Renteria.

The Sheriff's Department today announced that Pete Renteria is now considered the primary suspect in the killings of George and Sonia Ramirez and David Renteria, and he is regarded as a fugitive.

-Mark Gutglueck

Despite Widespread Perceptions That IEUA's General Manager Has Failed To Adequately Represent Consumers In Negotiations Over H₂O Importation Fees, He Will Be Given A 12 Percent Raise This Year *from front page*

the agency's stated goals as pertains to recycling and conserving water, drought management, recycling waste products and generating renewable energy, disputes have manifested, grown and in some cases raged between the Inland Empire Utilities Agency and some or even all of the nine governmental entities within its 242-square mile jurisdiction in western San Bernardino County over the way in which the agency, known by its acronym IEUA, has sought to achieve those ends.

To some extent, those differences have been so pointed that they have resulted in litigation that has entailed substantial expense in terms of legal fees and the expenditure of taxpayer and ratepayer money, begetting questions as to whether the agency's existence can be justified at all.

Moreover, there is a perception – as in the case of the escalation of Deshmukh's salary and the agency's acceptance of rising costs imposed upon itself and the multiple municipalities, agencies and water purveyors it represents with regard to the importation of water into the region – that the Inland Empire Utilities Agency is not fulfilling its role in improving the quality of life of the nearly 935,000 people who live within its jurisdiction but is rather layering further costs and taxes upon them for which they are receiving minimal, or no, benefit.

On February 15, the Inland Empire Utilities Agency took up consideration of giving Deshmukh a salary increase of 9.174 percent, from \$311,428 to \$340,000.

The raise was proposed by the Inland Empire Utility Agency staff, which is headed by Deshmukh. The staff report, which was apparently jointly authored by Deshmukh, the agency's

general counsel, Jean Cihigoyonette, and Denise Garzaro, the agency's secretary and office manager, stated, "The board of directors conducted the annual general manager performance review in closed session on January 18, 2023." Referencing "a performance award based upon completion of stated goals and objectives over the last year," the report stated that the "current employment agreement allows for a performance award of up to 10% of base salary. [B]ased upon the general manager's positive performance review, and a compensation survey of comparable agencies, the board determined that an amendment to the general manager's employment agreement should be considered. The restated employment agreement submitted herewith provides an increase in base salary to \$340,000 per year and an increase in employer contribution to the 457(b) deferred compensation plan to \$576.92 per pay period. It is recommended that the board consider and approve a general manager's performance award in an amount not to exceed 10% of base salary."

Board President Marco Tule and board members Paul Hofer, Steven Elie and Mike Camacho voted to confer the raise upon Deshmukh, with Board Member Jasmin Hall dissenting.

The vote came amid growing discontent with the Inland Empire Utility Agency among no fewer than seven of the governmental agencies that articulate with it over water, water use and water recycling policy.

As a regional wastewater treatment agency, the IEUA provides sewage utility services to seven contracting agencies under the Chino Basin Regional Sewage Service Contract, those being the cities of Chino,

Chino Hills, Fontana, Montclair, Ontario, Upland, and the Cucamonga Valley Water District in the city of Rancho Cucamonga. In addition to the contracting agencies, the Inland Empire Utilities Authority Agency provides wholesale imported water from the Metropolitan Water District to seven retail agencies, those being the cities of Chino, Chino Hills, Ontario, Upland, the Cucamonga Valley Water District, the Fontana Water Company in the city of Fontana, and the Monte Vista Water District in the city of Montclair.

There is a perception among at least some and in a few cases all of the city council, district board or company board members in Chino, Chino Hills, Ontario, Upland, Rancho Cucamonga, Fontana and Montclair that the Inland Empire Utility Agency in its dealings with the Metropolitan Water District has not sought the best financial terms available at least theoretically, given the volumes being purchased by the San Bernardino County entities collectively. Some believe that the 935,000 people living within the IEUA's jurisdiction are being ill-served by Deshmukh's unwillingness to press the Metropolitan Water District on behalf of Chino, Chino Hills, Ontario, Upland, the Cucamonga Valley Water District, the Fontana Water Company and the Monte Vista Water District.

At the same time, the Inland Empire Utility Agency is leveraging recycled water among a number of local communities as part of its function, and has pursued a policy of controlling the methodology and means of recycling, controlling that function and through its relationships with multiple entities including the State of California, making it difficult for the individual cities to utilize their own recycled water. While virtually all of the cities and water organizations are unhappy with the circumstance, the

City of Ontario, which has the most revenue of any municipality in San Bernardino County, has sued the Inland Empire Utility Agency over the matter. Fontana officials, meanwhile, are contemplating some form of action against IEUA, either legal or procedural, over the issue.

For that reason alone, many residents thought it was ill-advised for Tule, Hofer, Elie and Camacho to give Deshmukh the 9.174 percent raise.

Some of those and others thought it was poor form for the board majority to allow themselves to be swayed by a recommendation from Deshmukh in which he had a personal financial stake. Some have suggested that in making the recommendation, Deshmukh had involved himself in a conflict of interest that bore criminal implication.

Beyond that, the board's consideration and granting of the raise came within a long-prevailing atmosphere in which compensation increases for top echelon administrators and managers within public agencies have become routine and virtually automatic. Simultaneously, an examination of statistics shows, the salaries of public employees in general and public administrators specifically have been increasing at rates that outrun those generally provided to workers in the private sector going back for nearly a decade. Public sector jobs provide automatic annual raises that are in keeping with inflation and/or the consumer price index. Those automatic raises are augmented by periodic contract renewals or renegotiations, usually done on a two-year, three-year or four-year basis in which further raises are given, similar to what Deshmukh experienced this week. In general, the availability of salary and benefit increases in the public sector compares favorably to what most but perhaps not all employees in the private sector experience, that being that most of those

who do not work for the government can expect raises of no more or little more than the rise in the consumer price index. Meanwhile, public sector employees in California have consistently seen pay increases that outrun inflation.

A commonly perceived circumstance in Southern California is that higher echelon public administrators - department heads, city managers, school superintendents and agency managers - are seeing salary and benefit increases that are well above the pace of the increase provided not just to private sector employees but also public sector employees of a lower station. The seeming ubiquity of this phenomenon has resulted in an upward spiraling of what is being paid to the top people in government and in governmental agencies at the local level in Southern California.

Government reform advocates have decried what they characterize as an "incestuous" boosting of salaries that comes about when one city manager or school district superintendent, agency executive director or district general manager is hired or promoted and a few months later another top administrator is due for a review, at which time the increased salary of the previously referenced top administrator is taken into consideration, triggering a boost in the pay provided to the administrator under consideration. Weeks or months later, a top administrator elsewhere comes up for review and the process is repeated, using the baseline created by the most recent recipient of such a raise. This vicious cycle of salary and benefit increases continues on, ad infinitum, those who have expressed concern about the rising financial cost of government say.

A common refrain among city council members or board members is that the city manager or general manager they employ is so talented, so good at what

she or he does, that she or he is indispensable to that organization's operation, such that the governmental entity in question cannot afford to lose her or him to another agency. This mantra is repeated across agency after agency, to the point that those who occupy governmental administrative suites, virtually wherever they are and whoever they are, have grown accustomed to routine raises. To many, this means that raises are expected and they are not necessarily earned.

Moreover, a phenomenon has ensued by which the talent and value of an outgoing member of a particular management suite is automatically imputed to his or her successor. Commonly, an individual manager with a very impressive set of credentials - consisting of impeccable education, licenses and anywhere from a decade-and-a-half to a quarter of a century or more experience - will leave his or her post, either through retirement or being lured away by another agency, only to be replaced by a manager with a lesser degree of experience and accumulated skill who is nevertheless given a salary, benefits, perquisites and total compensation equal to that of his/her predecessor.

Often accompanying the periodic job performance reviews given to these top managers, if the review is a positive or at least not a negative one, are raises or bonuses. Nevertheless, the validity or integrity of those job performance reviews is subject to question or outright controversy. It is noteworthy that those reviews take place during closed sessions - in secret, behind closed doors outside the sight or earshot of the public, with no realistic opportunity for the public or anyone other than the board and one or two or three public agency employees who are very likely answerable to the person being reviewed to offer their views of the top administrator's performance or to provide

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Land Trade Between The U.S. Forest Service And The San Manuel Indian Tribe Is Complicated By Considerations Pertaining To Water Access On And Below The Property To Be Exchanged *from front page*

within our congressional boundary. The tribe did so and returned to the forest with a more complete proposal.” Anderson said, such a swap is potentially beneficial to the forest and the Forest Service.

“From the forest perspective, land exchanges are undertaken to acquire important resources, to fill inholdings and other gaps in the forest boundary, and/or to reduce the burden of administration on the forest. The tribe has explained that they wish to regain some of their ancestral lands. This is not a prerequisite of the land exchange and—as with our other two land exchange projects—the feasibility of the exchange is more dependent upon the qualities of the parcels rather than the motivation of the proponent.”

As federal land is subject to federal regulations, the environmental certification for the exchange will involve the National Environmental Policy Act, which requires federal agencies to assess the environmental impacts of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. This policy requires the federal government to use all practicable means to create and maintain conditions conducive to maintaining nature’s “productive harmony.”

Section 102 in Title I of the act requires federal agencies to incorporate environmental considerations in their planning and decision-making through a systematic approach. Specifically, all federal agencies are to prepare detailed statements assessing the environmental impact of and alternatives to major federal actions significantly affecting the environment. Under the federal system, the most exacting of these examinations is an environmental impact statement. A less intensive environmental impact

examination under the federal system is an environmental assessment.

Both San Bernardino County Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe and her predecessor as Third District supervisor, James Ramos, on January 24 sent letters addressed to the Forest Service endorsing the swap.

For various reasons, however, a substantial cross section of local residents has expressed concern about the potential long-term implication of the land exchange, and how it will play out with regard to a multitude of basic and quality of life issues. At the forefront of these is the impact on local water availability.

If the trade is made, the tribe will take possession of land that could serve as a crucial diversion point for water that feeds what is commonly known as the Bunker Hill Water Basin.

The Bunker Hill Basin covers approximately 92,000 acres and is located at the top of the Santa Ana River watershed and receives all the surface water runoff from the headwaters of the Santa Ana River, Mill Creek, Lytle Creek, and other tributaries.

The Bunker Hill Basin is bounded on the northwest by the San Gabriel Mountains, on the northeast by the San Bernardino Mountains, on the south by the Crafton Hills and Badlands, and on the southwest by the San Jacinto Fault. The Bunker Hill Basin stores approximately 5 million acre-feet of water, of which 1.2 million acre-feet are easily accessible. An acre-foot of water – the amount of water that would cover one acre to a depth of one foot or 43,560 cubic feet or 325,851.43 gallons, is roughly enough water to meet the domestic use needs of a family of four for one year. The Bunker Hill Basin provides water to approxi-

mately 650,000 people in the cities of Redlands, Highland, San Bernardino, Loma Linda, Colton, Rialto, Bloomington, Fontana, Grand Terrace, and Riverside, and portions of San Bernardino County, and is used to sustain the water needs for business operations in those areas.

An investigation of the Bunker Hill Basin from 2020 to early 2022 that was prepared by the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District with a publishing date of March 1, 2022 found that the annual change in storage for the Bunker Hill Basin for the preceding water year – from Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 entailed a negative, 93,846 acre-feet, that is a decrease or depletion of 30,579,853,299.78 gallons, that is, nearly 30.6 billion gallons.

Furthermore, according to the study, the accumulated change in storage of the Bunker Hill Basin as of the last day of the preceding water year on June 30, 2021 over the previous eight years, running from July 1993 and June 2021, was a negative 580,031 acre-feet, that is, the amount of water stored in the water table was 580,031 acre-feet less in the summer of 2021 than it had been in the summer of 1993.

Moreover, the total groundwater production from the Bunker Hill Basin for the preceding water year, from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, was 173,171 acre-feet.

According to the study, the estimated annual change in the amount of water stored in the Bunker Hill Basin for the then-current water year, running from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 was a negative 79,759 acre-feet, a decrease of 25,989,584,205.37 gallons or something under 26 billion gallons.

The study also estimated the annual change in the amount of water stored in the Bunker Hill Basin for the ensuing water year, that one running from July 1, 2022 until June 30, 2023 as a negative 5,943 acre-feet, a decrease of

1,936,475,618.49 gallons, that is, more than 1.9 billion gallons.

The study also pegged the average annual change in Bunker Hill Basin storage for the immediate past ten water years running from 2011 to 2021 at a negative 32,822 acre-feet, a decrease each year of 10,694,767,415.46 gallons, that is, nearly 10.7 billion gallons per year.

According to the survey, the estimated amount of water drawn from the groundwater supplies and used for agricultural purposes within the district boundary for the ensuing water year, July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, was 9,503 acre-feet. The estimated amount of other water to be drawn from the groundwater supplies for other than agricultural use during the ensuing water year from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 was 95,690 acre-feet.

The estimated amount of water necessary for surface distribution for the ensuing water year from July 1, 2022 until June 30, 2023 for the Bunker Hill Basin and the district was 77,235 acre-feet. The estimated amount of water necessary for surface distribution for the ensuing water year running from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 within the district boundary alone was 54,552 acre-feet.

The amount of water that is necessary for the replenishment of the groundwater supplies of the Bunker Hill Basin and the district for the ensuing water year from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023) was estimated at 131,381 acre-feet.

The amount of water which is necessary for the replenishment of the groundwater supplies within the district alone for the ensuing water year from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 was estimated at 111,163 acre-feet.

According to the report, due to the imbalance between groundwater recharge and production since 1993, the Bunker Hill Basin’s storage is 580,031 acre-feet below the level

which is considered full for purposes of the investigation. That is below the available water reflected in the 2021 report due to the decreased availability of native and State Water Project water for recharge.

To reach a state of full recharge by June 30, 2023, the aquifer below the Bunker Hill Basin would need, according to the report, during the ensuing water year from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, to experience an influx of 788,196 acre-feet of water. This recharge quantity would be needed to attain the 1993 storage level that is considered full.

The Basin Technical Advisory Committee recommended in the report that a maximum of 282,600 acre-ft in Mill Creek and Santa Ana River Basins.

“The district must continue to take all necessary steps to maintain and enhance its capability to conduct recharge operations,” the report stated. “These steps may include maintenance and repair of existing, diversion facilities, canals, dikes, basins, roads, and other water recharge facilities.”

Water cascades down from the San Bernardino National Forest and the San Bernardino Mountains both above and below the surface and reaches the two parcels to be transferred to the tribe. Since a good amount of the water from the National Forest fills the water table within the Bunker Hill Basin, many residents have misgivings that they and the entities that serve as water purveyors in the region which are considered downstream beneficial users under California water law, including the East Valley Water District and the San Bernardino Water District, could become disenfranchised by the tribe’s assertion, as a sovereign entity unrestricted by California law, of a claim to that water.

Of note, last year, the California Department of Water Resources was conducting hearings on whether BlueTriton

Brands, Inc., the current bottler of Arrowhead Spring Water, had the right to perpetuate the drafting of water from Strawberry Canyon, located at the 5,200-foot elevation level in the San Bernardino Mountains within the San Bernardino National Forest. That hearing was focused on BlueTriton’s disputed claim that it has an entitlement under both California and United States federal regulations to withdraw that water utilizing a series of tunnels, boreholes and horizontal wells at the headwaters to Strawberry Creek which it had acquired in 2021 from Nestlé Waters of North America. Ultimately, those hearings were aimed at settling whether the company’s assertion of water rights in the National Forest is valid, together with determining whether a draft cease and desist order issued by the State Water Resources Control Board against BlueTriton Brands, Inc. to reduce the amount of water drafted from Strawberry Canyon by 184.74 acre-feet (60.196 million gallons) per year from 192 acre-feet (62.56 million gallons) annually to 7.26 acre-feet (2.366 million gallons) per year should be upheld. Alan Lilly, the water rights and environmental law attorney who served as the hearing officer for those hearings, requested that the tribe allow himself, State Water Resources Control Board staff and the advocates on both sides in the dispute to have access to the springs located further down the mountains in the foothills above San Bernardino not too distant from the Arrowhead Springs hotel where the tribe owns land and which was alleged by those contesting BlueTriton’s water claims to be the actual historic source of the water bottled by the Arrowhead Spring Water Company’s corporate predecessors in the early part of the 20th Century upon which the company’s actual water rights were based. In response to Lilly’s request, the then-chairman

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When The County's Voters Cut The Board of Supervisors' Quarter Of A Million Dollar Annual Compensation To \$60,000, Hernandez Leapt Into The Breach, Formulating A Strategy Of Delay, Administrative Sleight Of Hand & Blackmail To Save Their Bacon & Solidify His Status *from page 2*

pervisor, were able to use Hagman's status as an assemblyman and chairman of the San Bernardino County Republican Central Committee to raise enough money to out hustle and out campaign Gloria Negrete-McLeod, who was then a Democratic Congresswoman who also vied for supervisor, despite a decided Democratic Party advantage over Republicans in the Fourth District.

Hagman came into county office with an



Curt Hagman

aggressive attitude in December 2014 after spending six years as a Republican Assemblyman in Democratic-dominated Sacramento. In San Bernardino, where at that time three of the members of the five-member board of supervisors were Republicans, Hagman instantaneously transitioned from being a little Republican fish in the big Democratic pond of the state's capital to being a huge Republican fish in the medium sized Republican pond of the county seat. He was instantaneously in virtual control of the board of supervisors and the only obstacle to his being in control of the county was Devereaux. With the assistance of the very-able Spence, Hagman went to work on massaging the three-fifths Republican-controlled board of supervisors in an effort to establish himself as the undisputed ruler of San Bernardino County. That assignment was complicated by the consideration that he needed not

three but four votes to force Devereaux out of his chief executive officer position. Devereaux remained in place through all of 2015, but by mid-2016, Hagman had made considerable headway, such that in January 2017 a deal was brokered by which Devereaux left as CEO, taking on a management consulting role.

Dena Smith had been the clerk of the board of supervisors for many years before Devereaux had entrusted her with the post of deputy chief executive officer in 2011. As Devereaux's deputy, Smith's major assignment had been running the county's land use services department. In 2016, Devereaux appointed her to the chief operating officer post. Upon Hagman effectuating Devereaux's removal as chief executive officer, Smith was installed as his interim replacement.

One of Devereaux's last accomplishments as chief executive officer had been to confer upon Hernandez the interim chief operating officer's assignment to replace Smith in 2017.

Hagman was a more forceful personality than virtually everyone in the county, including all of those on the fifth floor of the county administrative headquarters at 385 North Arrowhead Avenue in downtown San Bernardino, which housed the chief executive officer's quarters and those of the supervisors.

Smith was no match for Hagman in terms of preventing him from dominating the board and having them form a consensus in keeping with his goals, but she nevertheless represented a vestige of Devereaux's presence in the county. Hernandez, who was a dozen years younger than Hagman, was, despite having initially advanced under Devereaux,

on good terms with the supervisor, and lived in Chino in the heart of the Fourth District. Hagman recognized Hernandez as someone on the way up and he saw to it that Hernandez, later in 2017, was elevated to the position of the full-fledged county chief operating officer, which extended Hagman's control over the levers of governance in the county.

Time went by, and ultimately, in October 2017, the board selected Gary McBride, the county's chief financial officer, for promotion as Devereaux's ultimate replacement. That fit perfectly with Hagman's goals.

McBride was a devoted, accomplished and typical chief financial officer, one who was far



Gary McBride

more comfortable working with numbers than people, someone who routinely remained at his desk for three-and-a-half hours in the morning going over spreadsheets on his computer and repeating that in the afternoon, interacting with other employees only when necessary and when the job demanded it. After making the transition to chief executive officer, McBride's routine made a minimal change, extending insofar as his having some brief interaction with the members of the board of supervisors when they came into the county administrative building once or twice a week and on the two Tuesdays each month when the board held its meetings. Generally, he remained in his office, as often as not with the door closed. He delegated much of his interaction with staff to Hernandez.

Such an arrangement was more than suitable to Hagman. Whereas Devereaux insisted that

following an official vote by the board of supervisors, official action in the county was to work its way through him, such that he relayed instructions with regard to the board's policy to the chief operating officer, who in turn would give instructions to the department heads to actuate the policy, McBride had in large measure opted out of that process. That left Hagman free to approach Hernandez directly and instruct him to carry out not only what the board as a whole had voted upon but to put into play whatever it was that Hagman on his own wanted to see accomplished. Hernandez, looking to get ahead and recognizing that Hagman was the de facto leader of the board and the county, goose-stepped into action in accordance with whatever Hagman's orders happened to be.

The affable and easy-going McBride was uncomfortable with being confrontational with county staff and department heads, and was thus attitudinally and psychologically incapable of carrying out firings. Hernandez proved more than willing to act as McBride's hatchet man, seeming to relish such assignments, and throughout the county's governmental structure, Hernandez became known, indeed feared, as what some referred to as "the grim reaper." County employees en masse came to dread the prospect of looking up to see Hernandez make his way unannounced into his or her office and closing the door behind him, at which point he was known to unceremoniously present the unfortunate employee with a pink slip to let him or her know he or she had been terminated and was to be separated from the county at once, oftentimes without the opportunity or privilege to clean out his or her desk.

Hernandez became valued by the board of supervisors for his decisiveness and willingness to act.

A standing joke was

that one day McBride would look up to see Hernandez, in the form of the grim reaper he was celebrated by county employees as being, darkening the entrance into the county chief executive officer's quarters, at which point McBride would learn that the board of supervisors had decided his time was past.

Indeed, that is precisely what occurred in September 2020. Window dressing was applied, as the county made use of the then-ongoing COVID pandemic to announce that McBride was being reassigned, without any decrease in his \$373,833.78 salary, \$95,934.21 in pay additions and perquisites along with his \$209,608.03 in benefits for a total annual



Luther Snoke

compensation of \$679,376.02. The ever-agreeable McBride went along with the deal.

When Hernandez made the transition from chief operating officer to chief executive officer, Luther Snoke, one of the county's deputy executive officers, was promoted into the position of chief operating officer to replace Hernandez.

For more than a year-and-a-half, the tandem of Hernandez and Snoke appeared to be an unstoppable, dual-headed juggernaut that would overcome everything in its path, clearing a way through the county bureaucracy for Hagman and the rest of the board of supervisors, making virtually whatever the county's political leadership wanted to accomplish doable, come hell, highwater, low water or pandemic.

A first major test came when the county's voters in November 2020, barely a month after Hernandez was in place as chief executive officer,

passed by a supermajority – 516,184 votes or 66.84 percent to 256,098 or 33.16 percent – Measure K, which mandated the five supervisors be deemed part-time legislators, such that each was to see his or her total annual compensation, which ranged, depending on the number of their familial dependents covered under their benefit plans, from \$242,941.27 to \$280,905.92 annually, reduced to \$60,000. Hernandez huddled with then-County Counsel Michelle Blakemore, the county's top in-house attorney, and formulated a plan to prevent the supervisors' pay reduction from taking place. They proposed having the county retain three attorneys – Bradley Hertz, James Sutton and Nicholas Sanders of the Los Angeles-based Sutton Law Firm – and then authorizing them to sue the supervisors' own immediate employee, Lynna Monell, the clerk of the board of supervisors of San Bernardino County, in a legal petition to keep her from implementing Measure K. The board complied with that proposal, authorizing the lawsuit, and further acceded to the strategy of pursuing the matter in San Bernardino Superior Court wherein the matter could be kept in front of a judge known to be sympathetic to the county's governmental hierarchy rather than removing it to another county where there would be less prospect of political, administrative or financial pressure being brought to bear on the adjudicative process. Simultaneously, at Hernandez's urging, Blakemore, who as county counsel was supposed to make a spirited defense of Monell's right and obligation to effectuate the directives inherent in Measure K, forewent making any defense of the initiative or assertion of Monell's duty to enforce its provisions.

The filing of the lawsuit put Measure K into abeyance while it was subject to legal challenge, preventing the sal-

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New General Plan Lays Out City Officials' Pro-Development Attitude *from front page*

and 1930s- and 1940s- and 1950s and 1960s-era hotels and motels, its Chinese laundry, drug stores, furniture stores, jeweler, newsstand, restaurants, several general stores, and at least nine saloons or taverns including a Prohibition speakeasy are gone, many having fallen victim to fires, including arsons.

The city bottomed out as the least populous city in the county more than a decade-and-a-half ago with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, but in recent years the number of people living there has begun to increase so that it is moving toward eclipsing the City of Big Bear Lake as the county's second smallest city population-wise.

A general plan is a broad planning guideline that lays out policies and goals associated with a city's future development, a blueprint as it were for how a city will grow over the coming two to three decades. Such general plans specify zones for residential, commercial and industrial development, including the in-

tensity of that development as expressed in the zoning specifications as to the number and density of the particular types of buildings and structures to be allowed.

With the general plan having last been updated in 1986, city officials are revisiting the document for the most part in its entirety, including its land use and transportation elements, its zoning map and zoning code.

The new general plan calls for future growth over the next 17 to 20 years that will account for the existing population of 5,225 and employment of 1,403 to reach buildout conditions of approximately 7,750 residents and employment of 2,395.

As part of the land use element and land use/zoning map update, the city will revise its zoning code to allow for "consistency... [that will] create a downtown core designation," according to the draft general plan, where mixed uses combining residential and commercial components can be constructed. The city's development code is to be revamped to accommodate that change.

The general plan envisions the lion's share or even all of the development that is to take

place in the community happening within the city's 32.08-square-mile city limits.

The proposed updates to the land use and transportation elements of the general plan call for limiting growth and development to its incorporated boundaries and does not plan to promote growth or changing land use or circulation in its unincorporated sphere of influence. The majority of Needles' unincorporated sphere of influence is north, south, and west of the incorporated boundaries, with the exception of an 18-acre area that is owned by the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe and entirely surrounded by incorporated land.

Under the general plan update, the city's circulation system of streets and roads, bike-ways, and pedestrian routes will be enhanced to make more efficient and safe motorized and nonmotorized transit, with a focus on aligning future growth projections and necessary roadway improvements. The proposed project is designed to result in a more flexible and innovative mix of land uses that will revitalize the downtown district and provide new housing opportunities throughout

the city, while supporting economic growth.

An obvious major deviation from the 1986 general plan is the acceptance of all forms of commercial activity relating to marijuana, including cultivation of marijuana plants, the wholesaling of that agricultural product, the sale of the drug for medical and intoxicative purposes, research facilities relating to marijuana-based and cannabis-based compounds and derivatives and the manufacturing of cannabis-containing and marijuana-containing products.

The proposed land use map being used in the general plan update includes seven designations, those being single family residential, two-family residential, multiple-family residential, planned unit development, commercial residential resort, neighborhood commercial and general commercial.

As part of the revised land use element and land use map, the city will implement a downtown core area along West Broadway Street between E Street and H Street between 3rd Street and the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway, previously known as the Atchi-

son, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Railroad tracks. That area will provide for pedestrian access and what city officials called an "experience-oriented downtown" that serves as a local gathering place and a regional destination.

As part of the general plan, the city is exploring the potential of a "Main Street" concept within downtown Needles along Broadway Avenue, which reflects the historic nature of that thoroughfare. Toward that end, potential lane reductions are being considered to create a more vibrant commercial district. The existing four-lane span between L Street and A Street would be reduced to provide one travel lane in each direction with on-street angled parking. The lane reduction would only affect the lane geometries at one intersection: J Street and Broadway Avenue. In addition, the lane reduction would only affect the number of travel lanes for the segment of Broadway Avenue between J Street and G Street.

According to Needles City Manager Rick Daniels, the general plan under preparation "is a modern document

that is creating parks around town and makes sure there is sufficient space for the expansion of businesses, and allows for job creation. It represents an advance over the general plan of the 1980s by encouraging water and energy conservation."

In addition, Daniels said, the general plan will permit the construction of an adequate number of multifamily or apartment units.

"In the last four years, businesses have created over 600 jobs in the city," Daniels said. "But we had only 150 available units, so 450 people chose to live across the river in Arizona and in Nevada. If we had the available residential units here, those people would be living here and we would have a population now closer to 6,000 than 5,200 or so, which would further our economic recovery. Having more homes and residential options will make the city more attractive to people who want to work and move here. We see residential growth as critical to the prosperity we are looking for. By getting more housing and streamlining regulations to make sure developers and builders can get quick

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Elected Officials' Acceptance Of Revolving Door Comparables For Public Agency Managers Has Created A Vicious Upward Cycle In The Cost Of Government, IEUA Director Hall Maintains *from page 4*

anything that might go beyond what the board considers or which might contradict the official survey of the administrator's performance. This is exacerbated by the consideration that a largely apathetic and unengaged public is offered a very short window on even so much as knowing that the board is going to conduct such a performance evaluation. The time between the public being informed in what is a pretty obscure venue that a governmental agency is about to confer a raise on that agency's administrators or top administrator can be as little as three days and is virtually never more than five days.

Board Member Hall, who represents Fontana and parts of Rialto along with those cities' areas of influence and Bloomington, was the lone vote against giving Deshmukh the raise he had recommended for himself.

"As the representative of my constituents, the vast majority of whom are working at jobs which barely provide them and their families wages that are ten percent of what Shivaji is making, I just can't with a clear conscience agree to something like that,"

Resort Will Make Joshua Tree National Park Assessible To The Masses, Developer Says *from page 3*

using plastics. We want this to be ecological in every aspect. We will have charging stations for electrical cars."

Landver acknowledged the rural and remote aspect of the district where his and Greenberg's projects are to be located, but downplayed the degree to which the development would impact the area.

"We are looking forward to creating an increase in tourism," he

she said. "I am not criticizing his performance. An individual has a right to take a job and be well remunerated for what he does, but when we do this with taxpayer dollars, that creates a major concern in my eyes.

"If you look at staff, particularly those who are at the higher end of the pay scale, our salary range is out of control," Hall continued. "It is a problem with the IEUA and it is a problem with other agencies. When the salary of one administrator or general manager goes up, the salary of the managers of all of the other districts go up. They look at what others are paying and they have to offer something like it to get a general manager to work for their agency."

Hall said, "I am a taxpayer as well as an elected steward of taxpayer dollars. It doesn't seem that the public has an opportunity to make itself heard on the issue of what we are paying our governmental employees. The board makes its decision not through the eyes of the public it represents or with the input of those who have put us into office by electing us. We are viewing the performance of staff and our manager on the basis of what staff is telling us.

said. "[Joshua Tree National Park] is one of the wonders of the world. What we are doing will help people to discover and enjoy that amazing park. We think that's a good thing for society, to make it so more people can appreciate that desert land. I understand that the people who live there want to see the dark night sky and feel the calm air. We want to provide that setting for others who do not live there. We don't want to light up the dark sky. We do not want to disrupt the stillness. We will have meditation rooms that local residents can use. The restaurant will be another place for the

Staff writes the reports on everything relating to the agency, including whether staff members, or, as in this case, the general manager, deserves a raise and how much of a raise. That is not the right thing or the only thing for us to be basing our decisions on. Either Shivaji wrote that report and recommendation or staff wrote it. Staff reports to him. He is our general manager. He does a competent job for the most part. He does a lot, but because of the comparables in the formula we are using, we are seeing this out of control salary escalation. We have this situation and I am at a loss to understand why we have to keep doing this. Can't we pull back and make an assessment? For three decades or more we have used comparables to determine how much we are going to pay our people in government and there doesn't seem to be any way we can say, 'Stop it.'"

Hall said the Inland Empire Utilities Agency Board of Directors, like its counterparts heading other agencies, was illogically and reflexively paying anyone who comes into top management positions with those entities the same amount of money as those who previously held the same position, whether the new hire had credentials equal to the person being replaced or not.

"You will see a general manager with 30 years' or even 40 years' experience and a lifetime of expertise retire and in some cases what happens is you bring in someone else, sometimes someone who is way younger and less experienced with a limited track record, less than five years as a general manager or assistant general manager somewhere else or maybe even as little as three years' experience, but the newly hired general manager is given a salary right at or even over \$300,000 per year. That is not sensible. You ask why it is being done and you don't get an answer or a satisfactory answer. I don't know what to do except to express my opinion."

The *Sentinel* asked Inland Empire Utilities Board President Marco Tule what the rationale for giving Deshmukh a 9.1745 percent raise at this time was and if that raise truly reflected Deshmukh's value to the agency. The *Sentinel* followed up to ask whether in Tule's estimation giving Deshmukh an annual raise that matches the escalation in the consumer price index would be a sufficient show of appreciation toward him. Similarly, the *Sentinel* asked Tule if he considered Deshmukh to be indispensable to the Inland Empire Utility Agency's operations and if he thought Deshmukh to be irreplaceable.

The *Sentinel* sought some homes [at the same time that the resort is being developed] but that would not happen. The earliest would be 2026, with everything that has to be done, and I'm shooting off into the dark by saying 2026. My point is the land is zoned only for homes. Most likely it would be around 20 homes. That's one house for about every 250,000 square feet. This won't be like the gated communities in Palm Springs. It is not going to look like that. There will not be anywhere near the number of houses you see in other places. It is not going to be apartments or condominiums. If it is going to be homes, it will

He indicated that the residential component of the development he and Greenberg are proposing will be, again optimistically, available for occupancy roughly a year after the hotel resort is up and running.

"The residential units will come in 2026 or maybe later," he said. Those units will consist of prefabricated one story, 2,000 square foot homes, he said.

He said the housing component "is very much down the line. We haven't even started preplanning. We know that the land we have around the resort property is zoned for homes. It would be nice to put up

from Tule whether he was concerned that granting Deshmukh the raise he requested was going to perpetuate the upward spiral in top administrator compensation that is the general trend within government in Southern California. Additionally, the *Sentinel* asked Tule if he considered the staff report relating to, and positive recommendation for granting, the salary increase, originating as it did either with Deshmukh or with a staff member or staff members quite close to him who in any event must answer to him as one of his employees to represent a conflict of interest. The *Sentinel* asked Tule about his personal comfort level in voting to grant the general manager a 9.1745 percent salary raise, given that in doing so he and his board colleagues were acceding to a recommendation made by someone who stands to personally financially benefit from the action being recommended.

The *Sentinel* also sought to explore with Tule whether he was concerned about the escalating cost of governance and the degree to which higher and higher percentages of governmental entities' budgets are being devoted to or eaten up by paying employee salaries and providing those employees with benefits. The *Sentinel* asked Tule if he believed this increase in personnel costs was leading to

some homes [at the same time that the resort is being developed] but that would not happen. The earliest would be 2026, with everything that has to be done, and I'm shooting off into the dark by saying 2026. My point is the land is zoned only for homes. Most likely it would be around 20 homes. That's one house for about every 250,000 square feet. This won't be like the gated communities in Palm Springs. It is not going to look like that. There will not be anywhere near the number of houses you see in other places. It is not going to be apartments or condominiums. If it is going to be homes, it will

a circumstance in which an insufficient amount of money is being left in public agency budgets for funding for capital improvements, the maintenance/refurbishing/renewal of infrastructure and the construction of new infrastructure. The *Sentinel* asked Tule if he felt that those who had elected him expected him to hold the line on ever larger public employee paychecks and generous benefits and if he had any trepidation with regard to the runaway costs of governance.

Speaking directly to the *Sentinel*, Tule said he did not understand the questions.

Tule did say that the Inland Empire Utility Agency had met its legal obligation to give more than 72 hours of advance notice of the board's contemplated action to provide Deshmukh with the raise.

In a setting outside the public forum, Tule remarked that the practice of providing governmental management employees with regular raises that outrun what is typically offered to private sector employees had been long established and accepted as part of governmental culture before he was elected to public office and he sees no reason to alter that pattern while he is serving in the capacity of an elected official.

be very sparse. They are not going to be close to one another. The zoning is for one home for every five acres. Those are the rules that the county has. We will follow the guidelines. We can't make up our own rules."

Landver added, "One thing I would mention is these are to be prefabricated homes, which are many times better for the environment than stick homes. In a normal residential development, 30 to 40 percent of the building materials used end up in a landfill. That is not the case with prefabricated homes. This is going to be light on the

Continued on Page 19

Some Residents Concerned Mad Rush Toward Accelerated Development Will Sweep Needles' Historic Treasures From The Landscape

from page 7

answers, Needles will progress. When those who want to build want to know from us whether what they are asking for is to be given a yes or no, I have said, 'When in doubt, it is a yes.' This city has a strong pro-development attitude. We are dying for housing."

Daniels, who was brought in to Needles as city manager in 2013, said the reality then was that, "More businesses were closing than opening. More structures were being burned down every year than were being built. In earlier days, when this was a major stop along Route 66, the city was thriving. In 1970 and 1971, when Route 40 came in, instead of 6,000 cars coming down Broadway at 30 miles an hour and people stopping at our hotels and restaurants, they were flying by at 70 miles an hour. That was not planned, but that was the effect. The town began to die when the freeway bypassed us. That caused a decline in the viability of our business community because those customers coming through here were no longer available. That was a nationwide phenomenon along Route 40 and it played out exactly like that here."

With the new general plan, Daniels said, "We are opening up more commercial land for travelers at the interchanges. We're creating more business opportunity sites at the interchanges."

According to Needles Development Services Director Patrick Martinez, the 1986 general plan projected that by 2005 Needles would see its population reach 14,500.

"That did not happen," Daniels said, with some degree of under-

statement. "Right now, we are projecting that we will hit 7,750, which is about half of what was predicted in the last general plan. We believe the numbers we are working on are realistic and aren't pie-in-the-sky. When you adopt a general plan, the city makes investments in infrastructure and other things to accommodate the projected population. If you overstate or overestimate, it can lead to expenditures of money that don't need to be done."

Daniels said the plan has laid out locations "for a new park along the river and additional boat launches and riverfront trails. One way to grow our economy is to expand public access to and use of the Colorado River."

Despite being the county's smallest city population-wise, Needles is, at more than 31 square miles, the 14th largest or 11th smallest of the county's 24 municipalities.

It does have property within its confines where development is not exactly impossible or off limits but still problematic. A large portion of the property within the city is owned by the Bureau of Land Management. Most of that is listed under the general plan as open space, though some of it is zoned for residential development.

"Our BLM [Bureau of Land Management] land is generally planned for and viewed as best suited for off-highway use, hiking, biking trails and for wilderness experience," Daniels said. "If there was an application to develop any of that property, we would run a concurrent process with BLM to allow for the request to be processed. We would conduct hearings to have the approval of that land use where the city would jointly sign off with BLM on those development proposals."

Daniels said that city officials have seen very little resistance to the pro-development sentiment that is at the core

of the general plan update. "There are existing neighborhoods immediately adjacent to where we are offering zoning for multifamily use, and we have not heard anyone express any opposition," he said.

Nevertheless, there is some degree of skepticism and discomfiture with the how much of the already developed property in Needles is being cleared to make way for future development, with little regard to the value of historic sites and structures that are being razed in the process.

Planning Commissioner Michael Wright expressed concern as to the lack of consideration in the plan to protect what he considered to be historic homes in the downtown area.

Ruth Musser-Lopez, a property owner and former Needles City Councilmember, told the *Sentinel* that she is writing to the city to express her disappointment that the proposed general plan did not make a comprehensive local listing of historic properties and did not map out a viable plan for preserving those which are potentially eligible for state and national registers.

Though she was upbeat about the demonstration of confidence for the city's future that the plan entailed, she lamented that the emphasis on growth and development was overshadowing the elements of the cultural resource landscape and cityscape that were worth preserving.

"The general plan update involves no recent study of Needles' historic assets," she said. "The list of historic or cultural elements of the community is limited to two cemeteries and what is already on the National Register of Historic Places—the El Garces hotel, and a few places that are outside of city limits. Rather than recognizing that the community enjoys an entire downtown historic district along the National Old Trails Highway

and Route 66, the plan merely gives vague lip service and non-specific statements about preservation. They are not considering the cumulative impact this will have on that downtown historic district, which has already been partly decimated by razing of architecturally important historic structures like the California Hotel and the Episcopal Church, the burning down of the old recreation hall and the city's burning down of the historic Overland Hotel under the city manager's direction without a California Environmental Quality Act review. There are still some very nice remaining buildings from our past. For example, there are a few very beautiful Victorian homes still standing, the deco art of the Claypool Department Store, the circa 1910 historic theatre, some 'atomic' era Route 66 structures and the rare motor cabins still standing from about 100 years ago. But there is no new list or even an old 1986 general plan inventory list of the potentially eligible historic structures. Moreover, there is no analysis to determine if there are any historic or cultural resources to be listed for protection on local, state or national registers. One by one they could be being picked off and destroyed. This plan is supposed to be an improvement over the 1986 general plan, but it repeats the earlier document's lack of any historical preservation codification. A fatal flaw of both the 1986 and the current document is that the cumulative adverse impact of ongoing destruction of properties in a potentially eligible historic district was not addressed."

Musser Lopez further said that she did not think it appropriate that the Needles Pioneer Cemetery was going to be converted to a site on which multi-family housing was to be located.

"The property and its place on old 'Cemetery Hill' is of histor-

ic and archaeological significance and is the important remnant of what was once a much larger graveyard," she said. "It contains burials, headstones and other grave-related artifacts and features dating back to the late 1800s, some of which are associated with important and celebrated figures of Needles' history and its founding. The cemetery is an important confirmation of Needles' age as one of the oldest EuroAmerican communities in California."

She said the burial place "contains a rare connection between prehistoric Native American stone tool technology, metate manufacturing and rock art (petroglyphs) as evidenced by some of the headstones situated there. Oral history and archaeological evidence reveal that the subject headstones are likely made by Pete Lambert, known as 'the last Mojave chief.' Construction of multi-family housing units on top of a historic cemetery of this importance and significance would be an adverse impact that the California Environmental Quality Act document for the renewed general plan has not addressed."

Since her correspondence, the status of the historic cemetery was considered by both the planning commission and the city council and the proposed zoning map was changed by Meridian, the city's consulting firm assisting in the drafting of the new general plan, to include it in a public use zone. Nevertheless, the language in the California Environmental Quality Act document has not been updated.

Musser Lopez also expressed concern that the city was utilizing a mitigated negative declaration to provide environmental certification of the general plan update. She said a more exacting effort to evaluate the lasting environmental impacts of the redrafted general plan should be utilized, specifically a full-blown

environmental impact report or environmental impact statement, which would make an involved analysis of the potential and actual impacts that adopting the new general plan will have on the city and surrounding area in terms of all conceivable issues, including land use, water use, air quality, potential contamination, noise, traffic, and biological and cultural resources. An environmental impact report specifies in detail what measures can, will and must be carried out to offset those impacts.

"Though residential build out over the next 17 to 20 years is guesstimated by city management to be an expansion from a population of 5,225 to a population of 7,750, build out is really only limited by the acreage in the zones proposed for residential development," she said. "The California Environmental Quality Act document actually states on page 240 a capacity of 40,052 residents and the capacity for low-income residents is 25,106. These figures are far beyond the concept of 'limited growth' and such a projection of population change and the changes in required infrastructure in the form of water, sewer, electric and trash is not insignificant. It would require the city to complete an environmental impact statement and a disclosure of the cost of such new infrastructure to be defrayed by its existing customers. Once a zoning change opens the flood gates of intensified development, the law must be applied equally to property owners. As I read it, there is no built-in limitation to growth and development within the envelope of the next one-to-five years except available land zoned for residential use. The mitigated negative declaration does not address the potential impacts of such growth and what impact alleviation measures should be called for."

-Mark Gutglueck

Public Notices

FBN 20230000138
The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as W.M.S BODY CONTOURING & HOLISTIC THERAPY 15555 MAIN ST UNIT D7 HESPERIA, CA 92345; WENDY MUNOZ SANTIESTEBAN 18390 BIRCH ST HESPERIA, CA 92345

The business is conducted by: AN INDIVIDUAL

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: NOVEMBER 26, 2022.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130). I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ WENDY MUNOZ SANTIESTEBAN, Owner

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 1/06/2023

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy C6677

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on January 27 and February 3, 10 & 17, 2023.

FBN 20230000670
The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as FRAPPE & BOBA 4545 MISSION BLVD E MONTCLAIR, CA 91763; LAKE R ROJANAMONTIEN 12790 WILD HORSE WAY RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739

Mailing Address: 12790 WILD HORSE WAY RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739

The business is conducted by: AN INDIVIDUAL

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: JANUARY 23, 2023.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130). I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ LAKE R ROJANAMONTIEN, Owner

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 1/25/2023

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy I9576

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on January 27 and February 3, 10 & 17, 2023.

FBN 20230000342
The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as VENDIES VENDING 8320 VICARA DRIVE RANCHO CUCAMONGA 91701; VENDIES OFFICIAL LLC 8320 VICARA DRIVE RANCHO CUCAMONGA 91701

The business is conducted

Public Notices

by: A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY registered with the State of California under the number 202253219069

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: NOVEMBER 11, 2022.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130). I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ JACQUELINE CHENG, Managing Member

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 1/13/2023

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy J3108

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on January 27 and February 3, 10 & 17, 2023.

Notice of Sale of Real Property at Private Sale [Probate Code §§ 10300, 10304]

Case No.: PROPS2100424

In re the Matter of: The Estate of JIMMIE LEE O'DELL aka JIMMIE L. ODELL aka JIMMIE LEE ODELL aka JIMMIE L. O'DELL, Decedent.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, subject to confirmation by this court, on March 1, 2023, at 9:00 a.m., or thereafter within the time allowed by law, Darrell Lee O'Dell, as administrator of the estate of the above-named decedent, will sell at public auction to the highest and best net bidder on the terms and conditions stated below all right, title, and interest of the decedent at the time of death and all right, title, and interest that the estate has acquired in addition to that of the decedent at the time of death, in the real property located in San Bernardino County, California.

This property is commonly referred to as 24945 Ocotillo Way, Apple Valley, CA 92308, assessor's parcel number 0435-175-57-0000, and is more fully described as follows: The following described property situated in the City of Unincorporated area of the County of San Bernardino, State of California: PARCEL 2 OF PARCEL MAP 2808, AS PER PLAT FILED IN BOOK 25 OF PARCEL MAPS, PAGE 33, RECORDS OF SAID COUNTY.

The property will be sold subject to current taxes, covenants, conditions, restrictions, reservations, rights, rights of way, and easements of record, with any encumbrances of record to be satisfied from the purchase price.

The property is to be sold on an "as is" basis, except for title.

The personal representative has given an exclusive listing to Mason Realty.

Bids or offers are invited for this property and must be in writing, and can be mailed or delivered at any time af-

Public Notices

ter first publication of this notice and before any sale is made, to the attorney for the administrator: R. Sam Price Price Law Firm APC 300 East State Street, Suite 620 Redlands, CA 92373 (909) 328-7000

The property will be sold on the following terms: Cash, or part cash and part credit, the terms of such credit to be acceptable to the undersigned and to the court, 10 percent (10%) of the amount of the bid to accompany the offer by certified check, and the balance to be paid within thirty (30) days of confirmation of sale by the court.

Taxes, rents, operating and maintenance expenses, and premiums on insurance acceptable to the purchaser shall be prorated as of the date of recording of conveyance. Examination of title, recording of conveyance, transfer taxes, and any title insurance policy shall be at the expense of the purchaser or purchasers.

The right is reserved to reject any and all bids.

For further information and bid forms, contact: R. Sam Price Price Law Firm APC 300 East State Street, Suite 620 Redlands, CA 92373 (909) 328-7000

Darrell Lee O'Dell, Administrator of the Estate of Jimmie Lee O'Dell aka Jimmie L Odell aka Jimmie Lee Odell aka Jimmie L. O'Dell Price Law Firm, APC Date: January 25, 2023 Attorneys for Administrator, Darrell Lee O'Dell: R. Sam Price, Esq. (SBN 208603)

John M. Wilkerson, Esq. (SBN 201383) Price Law Firm, APC 300 East State Street, Suite 620 Redlands, CA 92373 Phone: (909) 328-7000 Fax: (909) 475-9500 sam@pricelawfirm.com john@pricelawfirm.com

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on January 27 and February 3, 10 & 17, 2023.

SUMMONS – (CITACION JUDICIAL) CASE NUMBER (NUMERO DEL CASO) CIVSB2131656

NOTICE TO DCI INVESTMENTS, LLC (AVISO DEMANDA-DO):

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):

JOHN BORRA, AN INDIVIDUAL

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons is served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for

Public Notices

a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no le protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted puede usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida si secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de referencia a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov), o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación da \$10,000 o mas de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

El nombre y dirección de la corte es: (El nombre y la dirección de la corte es): SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT 247 WEST THIRD STREET, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92415-0210

The name, address and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): RICHARD G. ANDERSON 041246 ANDERSON & LEBLANC, A.P.L.C. 1365 WEST FOOTHILL BOULEVARD, SUITE 2 UPLAND, CA 91786 T e l e - phone:(909)949-2226 DATE (Fecha): 12-22-2021

Clerk (Secretario), by AMADOR SANCHEZ Published in the SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SENTINEL on: 1/27/2023, 2/3/2023, 2/10/2023, 2/17/2023

Public Notices

COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT 247 WEST THIRD STREET, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92415-0210

The name, address and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): RICHARD G. ANDERSON 041246

ANDERSON & LEBLANC, A.P.L.C. 1365 WEST FOOTHILL BOULEVARD, SUITE 2 UPLAND, CA 91786

T e l e - phone:(909)949-2226 DATE (Fecha): 12-22-2021

Clerk (Secretario), by AMADOR SANCHEZ

Published in the SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SENTINEL on: 1/27/2023, 2/3/2023, 2/10/2023, 2/17/2023

SUMMONS – (CITACION JUDICIAL) CASE NUMBER (NUMERO DEL CASO) CIVSB2131656

NOTICE TO NAT DICARLO, AN INDIVIDUAL, AND DOES I THROUGH 25, INCLUSIVE (AVISO DEMANDA-DO):

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):

JOHN BORRA, AN INDIVIDUAL

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons is served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of

Public Notices

\$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no le protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted puede usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida si secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de referencia a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov), o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación da \$10,000 o mas de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

El nombre y dirección de la corte es: (El nombre y la dirección de la corte es): SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT 247 WEST THIRD STREET, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92415-0210

The name, address and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): RICHARD G. ANDERSON 041246 ANDERSON & LEBLANC, A.P.L.C. 1365 WEST FOOTHILL BOULEVARD, SUITE 2 UPLAND, CA 91786 T e l e - phone:(909)949-2226 DATE (Fecha): 12-22-2021

Clerk (Secretario), by AMADOR SANCHEZ

Published in the SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SENTINEL on: 1/27/2023, 2/3/2023, 2/10/2023, 2/17/2023

Public Notices

2/3/2023, 2/10/2023, 2/17/23

FBN 20230000824
The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as ZYNTEC 2314 CALLE BIENVENIDA CHINO HILLS, CA 91701; MEI DU 2314 CALLE BIENVENIDA CHINO HILLS, CA 91701

The business is conducted by: AN INDIVIDUAL.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: JANUARY 11, 2023.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130). I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ MEI DU Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 1/30/2023

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy J3108

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 3, 10, 17 & 24, 2023.

FBN 20230000778
The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as MASI TECHNIKS 243 W. VERNON DR APT B UPLAND, CA 91786:

JAIME MORA 243 W. VERNON DR APT B UPLAND, CA 91786

The business is conducted by: AN INDIVIDUAL.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: N/A.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130). I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ JAIME MORA

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 1/27/2023

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy J3108

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 3, 10, 17 & 24, 2023.

FBN 20230000215
The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as H & E HOIST AND EQUIPMENT SERVICES 12720 AMBER LANE RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739; EDER ESQUIVEL MAJESTY RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739

The business is conducted

Public Notices

by: AN INDIVIDUAL.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: January 1, 2023.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130. I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ EDER ESQUIVEL,
Owner

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 1/09/2023

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy J3108

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2023.

FBN 20220009648

The following entity is doing business as C&M PAINTING 9250 LOCUST AVE FONTANA, CA 92335 principally in SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY: CESAR MARTINEZ 9250 LOCUST AVE FONTANA, CA 92335

Mailing Address: 1440 S E ST #E SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92408

The business is conducted by: AN INDIVIDUAL.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: N/A.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130. I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ CESAR MARTINEZ,
Owner

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 10/19/2022

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy 18090

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on November 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2022. Corrected on December 23 & 30, 2022 and January 6 & 13, 2023. Corrected on February 3, 10, 17 & 24, 2023.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO-FBN20220010626

The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: AUTO AMBASSADOR, 1018 N VISTA AVE, RIALTO, CA 92376,

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Mailing Address: , AUTO AMBASSADOR, 1018 N VISTA AVE, RIALTO, CA 92376, State of Inc./Org./Reg. CA, Inc./Org./Reg. No.

Public Notices

5301463
Business is Conducted By: A CORPORATION

Signed: BY SIGNING BELOW, I DECLARE THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. A registrant who declares as true information, which he or she knows to be false, is guilty of a crime. (B&P Code 17913) I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/JAIME VALDEZ,
PRESIDENT This statement was filed with the County Clerk of SAN BERNARDINO on: 11/17/2022

I hereby certify that this is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office.

Began Transacting Business: 10/20/2022

County Clerk,

NOTICE-This fictitious business name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see section 14400 et. Seq. Business & Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on 12/16/2022, 12/23/2022, 12/30/2022, 1/06/2023
Corrected on 2/03, 2/10, 2/17 & 2/24, 2023.

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF ARLENE McCALL

Case No. PROSB2300099

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of ARLENE McCALL

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by Maurice McCall, Sr. in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that Maurice McCall, Sr. be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on March 13, 2023 at 9:00 AM in Dept. No. S37 located at 247 W. Third St., San Bernardino, CA 92415.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the

Public Notices

court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for petitioner: SANDRA B DeMEO

ESQ
SBN 194795
LAW OFFICES OF SANDRA B DEMEO
1130 E CLARK AVE
STE 150-283
SANTA MARIA CA 93455

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 10, 17 & 24, 2023.

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: CARLOS GUTIERREZ

CASE NO. PROSB2200796
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of CARLOS GUTIERREZ has been filed by SANDRA FRAIJO in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that SANDRA FRAIJO be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A hearing on the petition will be held MARCH 9, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in Dept. No. S36 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San Bernardino District.

Filed: MAY 31, 2022
Jennifer Saldana,
Deputy Court Clerk

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

Public Notices

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under Section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Sandra Fraijo: R. SAM PRICE

SBN 208603
PRICE LAW FIRM, APC

454 Cajon Street
REDLANDS, CA 92373
Phone (909) 328 7000
Fax (909) 475 8800
sam@pricelawfirm.com

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 10, 17 & 24, 2023.

NOTICE OF AMENDED PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: EDWARD LEWIS CLARK

CASE NO. PROSB2100861

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of EDWARD LEWIS CLARK

AN AMENDED PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by DANNIELLE GAILYNN OWENS in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE AMENDED PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that DANNIELLE GAILYNN OWENS be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE AMENDED PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the amended petition will be held in Dept. No. S-35 at 9:00 a.m. on MARCH 1, 2023 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San

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Bernardino District.
IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the amended petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under Section 9052 of the California Probate Code.

Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Dannielle Gailynn Owens:

ANTONETTE JAUREGUI (SB 192624)
1894 S. COMMERCIAL CENTER WEST, SUITE 108

SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92408

Telephone No: (909) 890-2350

Fax No: (909) 890-0106

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 10, 17 & 24, 2023.

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: ROGER UMINSKI, II

NO. PROSB 2300143
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of ROGER UMINSKI, II:

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by KELLY MARGARET ALLEN UMINSKI in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN BERNARDINO.

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that KELLY MARGARET ALLEN UMINSKI be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the amended petition will be held in Dept. No. S-35 at 9:00 a.m. on MARCH 1, 2023 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San

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a.m. on MARCH 15, 2023 at Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415, San Bernardino District. IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under Section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Filed: FEBRUARY 7, 2023
Jasmin Espeso,
Court Deputy Clerk
Attorney for KELLY Margaret Allen Uminski:
Jennifer Daniel
220 Nordina St.
Redlands, CA 92373
Telephone No: (909) 792-9244 Fax No: (909) 235-4733
Email address: team@lawofficeofjenniferdaniel.com
Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel February 10, 17 & 24, 2023

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

CASE NUMBER CIVSB 2300634
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: PETITIONER MICHAEL ALEXANDER LUZZI filed with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

MICHAEL ALEXANDER LUZZI to RHYS HENRI DORNHYLL

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

Notice of Hearing
Date: MARCH 24, 2023
Time: 8:30 AM
Department: S27

The address of the court is Superior Court of California,

County of San Bernardino, 247 West Third Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415

Public Notices

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a copy of this order be published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel in San Bernardino County California, once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing of the petition.

Brian S. McCarville,
Judge of the Superior Court

Filed: February 10, 2023

Deputy Clerk of the Superior Court: Paola Iniguez

Michael Alexander

Luzzi, In Pro Per

747 E. Pioneer Ave.

Redlands, CA 92374

(909) 699-3902

rhyshenridornhyll@gmail.com

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 10, 17, 24 and March 3, 2023.

FBN 20230001059

The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as MAJESTY ONE ESCROW A NON-INDEPENDENT BROKER ESCROW 8338 DAY CREEK BOULEVARD STE 103 RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739: MAJESTY ONE PROPERTIES INC. 8338 DAY CREEK BOULEVARD STE 101 RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739

The business is conducted by: A CORPORATION registered with the State of California under the number 3024218.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: February 8, 2008.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130. I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ JULIO CARDENAS,
President

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino on: 2/03/2023

I hereby certify that this copy is a correct copy of the original statement on file in my office San Bernardino County Clerk By:/Deputy J2286

Notice-This fictitious name statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the county clerk. A new fictitious business name statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14400 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

Published in the San Bernardino County Sentinel on February 10, 17, 24 and March 3, 2023.

FBN 20230000215

The following entity is doing business primarily in San Bernardino County as H & E HOIST AND EQUIPMENT SERVICES 12720 AMBER LANE RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739: EDER ESQUIVEL MAJESTY RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91739

The business is conducted by: AN INDIVIDUAL.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: January 1, 2023.

By signing, I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true information which he or she knows to be false is guilty of a crime (B&P Code 179130. I am also aware that all information on this statement becomes Public Record upon filing.

s/ EDER ESQUIVEL,
Owner

Statement filed with the County Clerk of San Bernardino

In Consolidating Power, Hernandez Valued Staff's Loyalty To Himself Above Competence, Resulting In Talented Employees Departing *from page 6*

ary reductions from going into effect until such time as the matter was adjudicated.

The matter was maneuvered into the courtroom of San Bernardino Superior Court Judge Donald Alvarez, who was known to county officials to be beholden to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department for having accorded him the courtesy of being escorted home on occasions when he had too much to drink before getting behind the wheel of his car. Judge Alvarez made a finding invalidating the entirety of Measure K on the grounds that its secondary provision limiting supervisors to a single four-year term was unconstitutional and that the term limitation element of the measure was not separable from its salary and benefit reductions. This, Judge Alvarez ruled, rendered Measure K unenforceable.

Ultimately, the sponsor of Measure K, the government reform advocacy coalition known as the Red Brennan Group, appealed Alvarez's finding and obtained a tentative ruling reversing his invalidation of the measure. But the Hernandez/Blake-more legal ploy bought the board of supervisors two years of time, during which the county government placed on the November 2022 ballot what it represented as its own government reform initiative, Measure D, which restored each individual supervisor's total annual compensation to roughly \$255,000 to \$275,000 while imposing on the supervisors term limits of three four-year terms, essentially equivalent to what had been the wage-scale and number-of-years-in-office rules that had been in place before Measure K's passage. Measure D passed by a margin of

241,894 votes or 58.22 percent to 173,582 votes or 41.78 percent.

In hatching a plan to prevent Measure K and the county's government reform advocates from reducing the supervisors to a financial status coequal to the average county resident, Hernandez vindicated the faith the board had placed in him.

Similarly, there were a number of other adjustments of the county's policy in the early rounds of Hernandez's tenure as the county's chief executive officer. Somewhat disturbing, however, was that just as his effectiveness as the county's chief operating officer under McBride had been dependent upon his ruthless willingness to exercise his authority, his reach as chief executive officer was in equal measure contingent upon intimidation and fear. His stock had risen while he was in the capacity of chief operating officer because of a symbiotic exchange with the board: he was willing to do what neither McBride nor most previous chief executive officers would allow, which was to let the board of supervisors have their way or put into play the action they wanted taken without having to hold a public vote ratifying the policy they were embarking upon. In return, his own power grew. What the board members, in particular Hagman, wanted, Hernandez wanted and therefore achieved for them. Under this arrangement, the county's department heads had a simple choice: either do what Hernandez ordered them to do, whether what he was asking of them was kosher or not, or risk being fired. When he made the transition to chief executive officer, he continued to apply that formula.

About a year-and-a-half into his time as the chief executive, however, the county structure was beginning to feel the toll of the way he had been operating.

One element of the problem Hernandez is now having stems from his own limitations. Vir-

tually his entire work history consists of being a government employee. Additionally, the breadth of his experience as a government employee is somewhat confined. Prior to becoming a deputy executive officer, he was a librarian. For a relatively short time he had overseen the county museum, as well. To be sure, libraries and museums are important cultural entities that have their place in the lives of many county residents. Still, most citizens and government employees understand those departments to have different levels of significance, priority, intensity, controversy, invasivity, authority and urgency than many other departments. Moreover, the county's libraries and its museum involve a far less substantial outlay of public funds than is the case with several other departments. Upon becoming chief operating officer, Hernandez knew very little about public works and engineering; the county hospital; land use services; the county health department; behavioral health; the department of human services formerly known as social services or the welfare department; the building department; real estate services, not to mention the departments that function under the authority of county elected officials other than the board of supervisors.

When Hernandez more than five year into Devereaux's time as chief executive officer demonstrated himself as a bright department head worthy of promotion and was accordingly plucked by Devereaux to move into a deputy executive officer assignment, an opportunity presented itself to allow him to remain in that capacity as Devereaux's understudy for another five to ten years so that he might familiarize himself with the nuts and bolts of a wide variety of the county's departments and divisions either in depth or at least in a fashion that was not superficial, which would have rendered him into a

seasoned county administrator who might eventually take the helm himself. An extensive period under Devereaux's guidance likely would have given him an understanding of how the various county departments are purposed to articulate into an overwhelmingly cohesive operation.

But Devereaux lasted less than two years as chief executive officer after Hernandez came into the county administrative suite, at which point Hernandez found himself thrust into the post of chief operating officer. His response to this was to use his primary asset – his utter ruthlessness – to serve his political masters, to threaten department heads with termination if they didn't do exactly what he told them to do, regardless of whether what he was ordering them to do was in accordance with standards or agreed upon best practices, wise, sustainable or justifiable in the long run. If those department heads did not do as they were told, if they refused to beat on the round peg placed before them long enough and hard enough and from as many angles as it might take to fit it into a square hole, they were soon out of a job. Hernandez established his reputation as someone who got results, someone who not only succeeded in getting square pegs into square holes and round pegs into round holes but getting round pegs into square holes and square pegs into round pegs if that was what was called for.

In his capacity as both the county's chief operating officer and as its chief executive officer, Hernandez encountered employees who resisted, or refused to follow, his orders or instructions. Virtually all of those employees are now gone. In his role as chief executive officer, Hernandez values loyalty above competence. Under Hernandez, a department head who salutes and carries out his or her marching orders, realistic or unrealistic, is highly valued. One

who takes it upon him or herself to attempt to explain why the goal or timetable that Hernandez has outlined is either unachievable or fraught with complication that may result in problematic results is deemed an obstructionist. A direct consequence of this is that at present, roughly half of the county's departments/divisions have interim department heads, individuals who have been temporarily promoted into their department's top spot because the department leader quit, was fired or was forced out.

While Hernandez still draws kudos from some for being a can do guy who gets things done, others lament that county government has come to exist as a spectacle in which someone who doesn't know what he is doing is telling department heads, many of whom are not fully qualified to hold the positions they occupy and have not mastered all aspects of the function they are overseeing, what to do and how to do it.

The inadequacy, potential liability and actual liability of this circumstance is beginning to dawn on some of the members of the board of supervisors.

A case in point is that of Terry Rahhal, who previously oversaw the county's land use services department. Experienced and respected, Rahhal had worked her way to the top of her profession as a planner with impeccable credentials and an impressive comprehension of all forms of development, including residential, commercial and industrial in both urban, suburban and rural settings. She had an encyclopedic knowledge of the standards applied to the infrastructure that must accompany development in whatever context it is to occur and embodied a complete mastery of the California Environmental Quality Act and its multiple methods or options of providing a project with environmental certification, running the gauntlet from a full-blown environmental

impact report to a slightly less comprehensive environmental impact statement and further down the scale of impact evaluation to an environmental assessment to an environmental examination to a mitigated negative declaration to a negative declaration.

When Rahhal insisted on running her department by the book, she rubbed Hernandez the wrong way, resulting in him not firing her, per se, but forcing her out as land use services director by allowing her to resign/retire. Absent her direction, the department has fallen into a state of disarray in which uncertainty and a lack of prompt follow-through has untracked projects, left other projects' permits unprocessed or undertakings delayed.

Hagman, whose backing of Hernandez was key to his advancement into the post of the county's chief executive officer, experienced this chaos firsthand. Long a resident of Chino Hills where a decade-and-a-half ago he was mayor, Hagman a while back purchased what some have said is his "dream house" in the unincorporated county area outside the Chino Hills City Limits. He embarked on an effort to construct on the property an accessory dwelling unit, that is a secondary lodging in the form of a cottage, the approval process for which under recent state law encouraging residential construction to offset California's housing shortage has been simplified and facilitated. Despite that, Hagman encountered multiple delays and complications as his applications for the construction project approval and permits wended their way through the county land use services department, which has jurisdiction in unincorporated county areas. The experience has given Hagman a glimpse of what was wrought with Hernandez's installation as county chief executive officer.

Contained within Hernandez's personality *Continued on Page 18*

As A Sovereign Nation, The Tribe Could, Once It Has Land Across Which The Region's Water Flows, Take Possession Of As Much Of It As It Can Capture Without Regard To Downstream Water Rights from page 5

of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Kenneth Ramirez, refused to provide access to the property for surveying purposes, based upon the claim that the property was ancestral Indian land, telling Lilly that a video of the property taken by tribal members would have to suffice as the survey of the property needed for informing the State Water Resources Control Board's decision-making process.

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians is considered to be a sovereign nation independent of both U.S. and California law and governance. This has given rise to concern among local residents that if the tribe is granted ownership of the two parcels through which a significant amount of water flows into the Bunker Hill Basin, at some future date the tribe could divert that water for its own purposes or otherwise dam the water to prevent it from reaching the basin.

Indeed, an incentive for the tribe to engage in such a diversion exists following the 2017 expansion of the San Manuel Tribe's Casino operation, which included a resort-style 500-room hotel, expanded gambling facilities, a 4,000-seat performance venue, a spa, restaurants, retail shops and a 2,200-vehicle stall parking structure. Moreover, the tribe since 2019 has been pursuing the construction of upwards of 30 mansions intended as the domiciles for many of its members on graded hillside property on and adjoining the San Manuel Reservation in the foothills north of the northeasternmost portion of San Bernardino and the northwesternmost corner of Highland.

One of those residents, Amanda Frye of Redlands, encapsulated six issues she believes need to be addressed before the trade is ratified. The

assertion that the two expanses of land contained on the 1,475.90 acres located near the Arrowhead Springs Hotel to be obtained by the tribe are San Manuel Ancestral lands is not supported by the historical record, according to Frye.

"In a January 9, 2023 U.S. Forest Service letter File Code: 5430, the exchange proposal is referred to as the 'San Manuel Ancestral Land Exchange,'" Frye stated. "There has been no proof that the U.S. Forest land is or was uniquely San Manuel Ancestral Land. The Yuhaaviatam of the San Manuel Nation, previously listed as the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in California or the San Manuel Tribe of the Serrano Indians, published its history on the tribe's website, which never mentions or claims that the San Bernardino National Forest land proposed in the 'land exchange' was their ancestral land nor any connection to the Yuhaaviatam tribe."

She cited <https://sanmanuel-nsn.gov/culture/history> and the passages contained in the document *Our History | San Manuel Band of Mission Indians.pdf* posted on that website as the basis for her assertion.

"The history mentions that the Serranos moved from the mountains near Big Bear and settled near Harlem Springs," she said. "Other historical sources concur that the tribe was located in the mountains near Big Bear and moved later to the San Bernardino Valley to settle near Harlem Springs, not the Arrowhead Hot Springs. Multiple sources indicate that the San Bernardino National Forest land proposed to be given to the tribe in the land exchange was in ancestral lands of the Guachama, who were thought to move toward West toward Los Angeles in the

early 1800s, and later the Cahuilla Tribe, now known as the Cahuilla Band of Indians, with the San Manuel Tribe moving into the valley years later near Harlem Springs."

She cited the online document <https://cdm15952.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15952coll4/search/searchterm/San%20Bernardino>, in asserting, "Other references make no mention of Indians at Arrowhead Springs."

According to Frye, "The Mormons and other early pioneers have many historical claims to this area that the San Manuel tribe wants to take from the San Bernardino National Forest."

Frye noted, "The Cahuillas did not appear to be notified in the public notices provided by the U.S. Forest Service. Historical writings mention the Cahuilla and ancient Guachama tribes associated with the state Geological Landmark #977, otherwise known as 'The Arrowhead.' The internet-based website <https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/Detail/977> states the Arrowhead was referred to as the "Ace of Spades" by early pioneers David Noble Smith in his possessory claim and John Brown Jr. in recorded court testimony."

Furthermore, according to Frye, "The San Bernardino National Forest was founded on February 25, 1893 as the "Forest Reserve" to protect the water supply for the surrounding communities. The proposed land exchange harms all San Bernardino Valley residents that rely on waters that the San Bernardino National Forest was founded to protect. This proposed land exchange is not for benefit or in the interest of the public as required by law. This proposed land exchange only benefits a few people of a sovereign nation in the small, but the extremely wealthy Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, referred to as a tribe and formerly recognized as the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. In fact, this land

exchange violates 43 United State Code §1716 (a), as the proposed tracts of San Bernardino National Forest land to be given to the tribe include many water sources for San Bernardino Valley's Bunker Hill Basin, including multiple perennial and intermittent streams. The land exchange is illogical, as it harms millions of members of the public by taking their water supply which the San Bernardino National Forest was founded to protect in 1893."

Frye referenced the yet unresolved matter pertaining to the tentative cease and desist order against BlueTriton Brands and the need to have closure on the issues it involves prior to any decision with regard to the land exchange being made.

"A current State Water Board issue which involves lands and water in the proposed San Bernardino National Forest is still ongoing," Frye said. "The State Water Board Enforcement Branch Administrative Hearing Office is still in the process of releasing its rulings in the draft cease and desist order against BlueTriton Brands, Inc., and this issue will then proceed to the State Water Board. Some of the proposed exchange land in T1N R3W R4W are part of this State Water Board issue. Furthermore, during the hearing it was revealed that the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, formerly recognized as the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, was receiving unauthorized diversions from BlueTriton Brands, Inc. Although the tribe is not a formal party to the case, it is indirectly involved through relationships with BlueTriton Brands Inc. and Arrowhead Bottled Water operations. Also, one of the non-federal land parcels in this proposed land swap was formally owned by the Arrowhead Bottled Water Company owners before it was laundered through the U.S. Forest Service and the tribe-supported Southern Cal-

ifornia Mountain Foundation and sold/given to the tribe. Again, this proposed land exchange is not in the public interest, violating 43 United States Code §1716 and 36 Code of Federal Regulations § 254.36."

Frye said, "43 USC§1716 (d) requires an appraisal of lands within 90 days of initiation of the agreement. No appraisal of lands within the 90-day timeline after the United States entered into the agreement to initiate an exchange of lands with the 'San Manuel Tribe' or Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, formerly recognized as the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. According to documents received from a Freedom of Information Act request, this initiation of land exchange started in 2021. There is no land appraisal. This appraisal should have been done within the 90-day timeline that started in 2021. This violation should nullify this land exchange proposal."

Frye asserted that "An infographic by BlueTriton Brands, Inc. revealed an unauthorized secondary diversion to the tribe at their private investment property, Arrowhead Springs. This unauthorized diversion was confirmed at the administrative water board hearing on January 22, 2022. This unauthorized diversion from Strawberry Creek was metered and read by the tribe as seen in the picture and hearing record. The tribe has failed to report this unauthorized diversion to the State of California or any agency. The tribe's diversion is not separately reported to any public agency and was not submitted to the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District for recordation, nor the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, as confirmed during the administrative hearing for BlueTriton Brands, Inc. In the picture, the Tribe can be seen reading the meter, demonstrating complexity in the water diversion and thus liability in the unauthorized water

diversion of BlueTriton Brands, Inc. There was no evidence submitted regarding how the Tribe is using the water or if the Tribe is further diverting the unauthorized water. There is no evidence authorizing the respondent's secondary diversion of Strawberry Creek headwater springs on San Bernardino National Forest wells at T2N R3W sec 30 and 31 to the tribe nor any evidence that this diversion is authorized by riparian rights."

"Frye said, "BlueTriton giving away forest water to the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians appears to be a back door deal to take the forest water which would have flowed to the Bunker Hill Basin and injure the forest and at least half-a-million people in the surrounding communities."

Frye contended "The United Forest Service had identified water rights associated with the Arrowhead Springs Property. The name Arrowhead Water and Power is not a legal entity and the current owners, the San Manuel Tribe, have not changed the name in the State Water Board's Electronic Water Rights Information Management System nor reported any groundwater take from any of the said wells associated with the property, according to record requests to the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. There is still an active State Water Board case for the waters and properties in the proposed land exchange."

Citing three studies or surveys of the water quality in the Bunker Hill Basin – those being <https://doi.org/10.3133/wri77129> and <https://doi.org/10.3133/wri884203> as well as <https://doi.org/10.3133/ds1096>, Frye contended, "The United States Geological Survey has documented the role of the San Bernardino National Forest streams and the Bunker Hill Basin Water Supply from the early 1900s to present. There are many United States Geological Survey historical

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Despite The Authority Granted Him, Hernandez, Has An Incomplete and Imperfect Command Of How Many Of The County's Departments Function, Rendering Him Unable To Deliver The Results Requested Or Otherwise Dependent Upon Chief Operating Officer Snoke To Effectuate The Board Of Supervisors' Requests *from page 6*

is the drive to micromanage the county, his incessant need to stay on top of or otherwise monitor all interactions between county staff and not only its elected officials but those who work within the elected officials' offices. County employees are required to electronically carbon copy to Hernandez any communications – primarily emails and text messages – that they send to the supervisors or the other county elected officials or their employees, including those with the sheriff's department, district attorney's office, treasurer's/tax collector's/auditor's/controller's office or assessor's/county clerk's/county recorder's office. While the classic function of someone in a manager's role such as that of the chief executive officer is to plan, organize direct and control, Hernandez has taken the concept of control to what many county employees consider to be absurd lengths. The sheer volume of emails and text messages that are routed to Hernandez represent a substantial challenge merely in terms of the time it takes to wade through them and this often distracts him from focusing on the more important communications specifically intended for his attention sent from county employees who are seeking to communicate directly with him and get his direction.

Simultaneously, county employees have told the *Sentinel*, while Hernandez insists that all such information and communication flow to him even when such minutiae is not crucial to his own executive and administrative function, he is pointedly reluctant or even unwilling to allow information that comes into his possession to reach others who have a desire or actual need to have access to it.

This is illustrated by the secretiveness that Hernandez is insisting upon with regard to the numbers that were obtained in late January as a result of what is known as the "point-in-time" count of the homeless population in the county. This year, that count was conducted on January 26 and involved several San Bernardino County divisions, including the office of homeless services, the sheriff's department, the department of behavioral health, the department of aging and adult services, the public health department, the probation department and a large number of volunteers from the county's 24 municipalities and its unincorporated communities. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires local governments to conduct counts of their homeless populations at least every other year, and with the exception of 2021 because of the COVID 19 pandemic, San Bernardino County has conducted such counts every year since 2013.

There is a natural curiosity as to the results of those counts as well as practical reasons why information as to the number and whereabouts of the homeless can facilitate efforts to redress the matter. In addition, elements and individuals within county government have requested the data in the form of the preliminary numbers, which are generally available the day of or, at the latest, the day after the count takes place.

Hernandez has decreed, however, that the numbers, both in total and as to each individual city or community in the county, are to be withheld until they are confirmed. This means that the official count – and any count whatsoever – will likely remain publicly undisclosed until

April. That withholding applies not just to the public but internally within the county.

Homelessness in the county is most pronounced within the Fifth Supervisorial District. As a consequence, Fifth District Supervisor Joe Baca and his staff have requested that the numbers – qualified as being tentative and unofficial – be released. Likewise, the First and Second districts have significant numbers of homeless, both sheltered and unsheltered, subsisting at various spots within them. First District Supervisor Paul Cook and his staff as well as Second District Supervisor Jesse Armendarez and his people have requested that they be given an assessment of what challenges their communities face in dealing with the dispossessed living on the streets. Inexplicably, however, Hernandez insists on keeping the numbers from them.

There have been different interpretations among county officials, county employees and county residents of Hernandez's motives and intent in suppressing information and his insistence on maintaining control of the information and how it is distributed and applied.

Some are yet willing to forgive this tendency toward micromanagement, believing it is a reflection, actually, of his ability. They see his efforts as well-intentioned and intrinsic to ensuring that the right steps are being taken in running the government and believe his insistence on being informed about what is going on is merely a manifestation of ensuring the board and county residents are being served not only adequately but well.

Others, however, see what is going on as a power grab or an effort to shift power to himself and/or an unintentional acknowledgment on his part that he doesn't have the competency or skill to do the job he has been tasked with. To them, the secretiveness is a sign that he is overwhelmed and is trying to keep

anyone from finding out.

Some see an ironic parallel between what occurred during McBride's tenure as chief executive officer and what is happening now. There was a perception three years ago that McBride was not up to or capable of running the county and therefore had to rely on Hernandez, who was, or seemed to be, a supercompetent or omnipotent administrator. Instead of going to McBride to get something done, the supervisors pegged Hernandez, the chief operating officer, as the go-to guy. At present, the county supervisors and their staffs have learned or are learning that Hernandez's reputation for getting things done was based not on his ability or knowledge of how things worked but rather on his ability to intimidate county staff do what they were told without regard for what the consequences would be down the road. Because his insistence that staff demonstrate absolute loyalty to him has resulted in so many knowledgeable and capable county employees leaving and because he does not embody that knowledge or ability himself, Hernandez is no longer able to produce results, county employees have observed.

The one thing Hernandez has done right, county employees have told the *Sentinel*, is to delegate responsibility for about two-fifths of the county's function to Snoke. According to them, Snoke delivers on the tasks he is called upon to perform in a remarkably short turnaround time. They attributed Snoke's ability to meet expectations to his previous employment, before going to work for the county, within the private sector.

"In the business world, outside the realm of government, time is money," one high-ranking county official told the *Sentinel*. "That's where Luther came from. Luther is a thousand times more efficient than Leonard. If you ask Luther to do something that hasn't been done be-

fore, he gets it right the first time and goes on to the next thing and then the next and then the next. Leonard isn't agile enough to meet new demands. He doesn't necessarily know how things work, but he can tell someone who does know to make it work. If you want to run things day-to-day the way they've always been run with no changes, Leonard's your man. If you want to do new things, identify solutions, meet challenges head on, you call Luther."

For the time being, the *Sentinel* was told, Hernandez is safe. But things aren't what they were even as recently as this time last year and the ground is continuing to shift under his feet.

The support of Haggman, former Second District Supervisor Janice Rutherford and Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe were key factors in Hernandez's ascendancy. He was helped as well by the support of former Fifth District Supervisor Josie Gonzales, who was termed out of office in 2020, just a few months after Hernandez became county CEO. Joe Baca, Jr., who succeeded Gonzales, has had a decent relationship with Hernandez. Still, Hernandez has stiff-armed Baca with regard to information that the supervisor and his staff have sought, such as that pertaining to current homeless numbers. Baca is slowly learning as well, one county insider told the *Sentinel*, that Hernandez's effort to simulate competence is more sizzle than steak. "Joe is starting to see that the CEO is an empty suit," the staffer said.

Hernandez was hired as chief operating officer with the support of then-First District Supervisor Robert Lovingood. Lovingood in December 2020 was succeeded by Paul Cook, who is on the brink of turning 80 years old and is a retired Marine Corps lieutenant colonel, former California assemblyman and congressman. Previously, Cook in public would engage in good natured

repartee with Hernandez, ribbing him about how his youthful appearance clashed with his position of authority. More recently, however, word has spread about Hernandez's involvement in an effort to depose Cook as supervisor and see him replaced, perhaps even before Cook's current term draws to a close in 2024. It thus appears that one solid vote to remove Hernandez as county CEO exists.

Former Supervisor Janice Rutherford was a reliable member of the voting bloc that brought Hernandez in to replace McBride, and she was, right up until the time she was obliged by term limits to leave office in December 2022, highly laudatory of him and his ability. Her replacement as Second District supervisor, Jesse Armendarez, is yet orienting himself to county operations and remains a tabula rasa as far as Hernandez's function goes, although the chief executive officer so far has not had occasion to impress the board of supervisors' newest member with the same degree of dynamic responsiveness as Snoke has on a repeated basis over the last two-and-a-half months.

Supervisor Dawn Rowe has grown highly dependent on Hernandez and relies on him as much or more than on her own office staff. What is more, Hernandez is highly conscious that Rowe, who was selected last month to serve as chairwoman of the board for a two-year term, is his most important ally and crucial to his prospect of remaining as chief executive officer.

Unlike Devereaux, Hernandez was not provided with a super bonus when he was promoted to chief executive officer in 2020, and he can be handed his walking papers on a simple 3-to-2 vote. In this way, the overwhelming red hot 5-to-0 enthusiasm for him among board members that was demonstrated at the time of his hiring and which might even have yet been ex-

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San Bernardino County Coroner Reports

#702301062: On Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 6:59 PM, the Barstow Police Department responded to Lenwood Road and Tortoise Road reference a vehicle vs. pedestrian traffic collision. The pedestrian, Luis Rivera, 53 years old, a resident of the City of Hawthorne, was transported to a local area hospital and later pronounced deceased. For additional information contact the California Highway Patrol. [02132023 1115 SC]

#702301109: On Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 06:43 PM, Officers from San Bernardino Police Department responded to the intersections E 40th St and N Harrison Street in San Bernardino for a reported traffic collision. A pedestrian, 84-year-old Baldomero Esteva Ramirez resident of San Bernardino was pronounced deceased at the scene at 7:13 PM. For additional information please contact San Bernardino Police Department. [02132023 1115 SC]

#702301049: On Friday, February 3, 2023, at 6:52 PM, Anthony Charles Locke, a 44 year old resident of Fontana, was walking across Arrow Blvd., just west of Almeria Ave., in Fontana, when he was struck by an automobile. He was transported to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead on Saturday, February 11, 2023 at 10:34 PM. California Highway Patrol – Rancho Cucamonga is investigating. [02132023 1115 SC]

#702301007: On Monday February 6, 2023, at 7:40 PM, California Highway Patrol responded to Interstate 15 freeway travelling northbound, underneath the Palmdale Road overpass in Victorville for a reported traffic collision. A pedestrian, Miguel Valadez Hernandez, age 39, a resident of Victorville was pronounced dead on scene. For additional information contact California Highway Patrol. [02132023 1115 SC]

#702300964: On Friday, February 3, 2023, at 2:55 PM, Montclair Police Department responded to a traffic collision in the 5000 block of State St. in Montclair. The Driver, Vincent Delatorre, 29, a resident of Chino, was pronounced dead on scene, at 3:17 PM. For additional information contact Montclair Police Department. [02132023 1115 SC]

The Coroner Reports are reproduced in their original format as authored by department personnel.

Proponents Of Resort Project In Wonder Valley Kept The Residential Component Of Their Proposal Hidden From The County Division Processing The Application *from page 8*

environment. Instead of hundreds of hammers hammering and bulldozers clearing the property, we will have one crane dropping the prefabricated buildings into place. This will not take away from the way of life the residents now have.”

In his remarks to the *Sentinel*, Landver librated between enthusiasm for the economic development he said his and Greenberg’s efforts would represent for the community and an effort at providing assurance that the changes to the desert landscape would have no appreciable impact on the quality and pace of life of those already living in Wonder Valley.

“Even though there will be more cars on Amboy Road, the people of Wonder Valley will be gaining a lot in terms of how they will have more money for health care and other needs every county has,” Landver said. “We will be creating local jobs. We want to hire people locally. We are not going to be bringing people in from Texas to work at the resort. There is a need for people to have jobs so they can pay their bills and rent.”

Landver said, “As tourism increases, all of the money that comes in will go to local restaurants, coffee shops, local

businesses in the community, flower shops, general stores and markets. A hotel will create a lot of tax revenue and that tax revenue goes back into the community. Wonder Valley lost its fire station and the paramedics. It now takes a long time for those paramedics to respond to emergencies. San Bernardino County is obligated to put any increase in tax money back into the community it came from. This will increase services. The local residents do not realize that our hotel will put millions of dollars back into their community. They will be able to bring the fire department and paramedics back.”

Landver suggested, somewhat improbably, that the local populace is more in favor of the resort project than opposed to it. He admitted that some Wonder Valley residents had gone on record against the proposal and that a grassroots movement contesting the adequacy of the mitigated negative declaration for the project and the application for its approval had formed, but he claimed those naysayers were outnumbered by those who want to see the project proceed.

“There have been over 300 people who have sent letters of support of the Wonder Valley Inn,”

he said. “There are as many letters saying ‘We support the project’ as ‘We don’t support the project.’ There are plenty of people who are very pleased with what we are doing, but they are scared to come out and say so. They support us behind the scenes. The county is receiving letters of support and they have reported that to us. There are hundreds of people who live in Twentynine Palms who support the project. The truth is more people support the project than oppose it, but you hear more from the ones who are against it. All of the concern the residents have about the project we have thought about and planned for and that means we are following the state’s regulations on everything from sound, environmental issues, disrupting the night sky. We are not designing this on the back of a napkin. We are trying to be considerate of each of these things and the state environmental regulations are there to make sure we do that. We are using our resources to mitigate those things. We don’t want to disturb the way of life, the water availability, the sound level, the night sky.”

The development of the entirety of the 160 acres presents nothing for anyone to worry about, Landver said, and those working themselves into a lather over it are being unduly alarmist, he said.

“That land was a jo-

joba bean farm,” he said. “It used 100,000 times more water than what we will be using. We won’t be using anywhere near

the water the farm used. We will have drought tolerant plants. Everything has been considered. It breaks my heart that we

put a lot of time and effort into not disturbing the land and no one appreciates that.”

-Mark Gutglueck

Local Residents Skeptical About The Wisdom Of Signing Land & Water Rights To Tribe *from page 17*

and present documents which show that much of the water in the Bunker Hill Basin originates in the San Bernardino National Forest. The non-Forest lands appear to recharge a different water basin. The Bunker Hill Basin provides water for a half-a-million to millions of people. The local water agencies which are responsible for the Bunker Hill Basin were not noticed of this land exchange either.”

Frye said the unwillingness of the tribe to cooperate with the State Water Resources Control Board in ascertaining the actual extent of or limitations on BlueTriton’s water rights during last year’s hearing process when the tribe’s then-chairman, Kenneth Ramirez, refused access to the tribe’s property near the Arrowhead Springs hotel demonstrated that the tribe would not be likely to respect the existing water rights that apply to the property downstream of the acreage the tribe is looking to acquire in the land swap.

“The tribe has publicly stated that it is not willing to follow the

rules or orders from the State Water Resources Control Board, thus confirming the devastating impact this proposed land exchange would have on the water supply, which the founding of the San Bernardino National Forest Reserve was supposed to protect,” Frye said. “The law and case law do not align with the tribe’s opinion expressed in this letter, but the letter reflects the tribe’s attitude and what will most likely happen if this land exchange is allowed to proceed.”

Other local residents have said that the Forest Service and the tribe have failed to give adequate legal notice of the intended land trade to the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, the East Valley Water District and the California State Water Resources Control Board’s Tribal Beneficial Uses office.

Some of those residents and others have questioned whether the exchange and terms under which the exchange is to take place are in compliance with provisions contained within California Water Code § 75560-75561, which applies to the Bunker Hill Basin.

Under § 75560, “The district shall annually

cause to be made an engineering investigation and report upon groundwater conditions of the district.”

Under § 75561, “The engineering investigation and report shall include all of the following:

a) Information for the consideration of the board in its determination of the annual overdraft.

(b) Information for the consideration of the board in its determination of the accumulated overdraft as of the last day of the preceding water year.

(c) A report as to the total production of water from the groundwater supplies of the district for the preceding water year.

(d) An estimate of the annual overdraft for the current water year and for the ensuing water year.

(e) The amount of water the district is obligated to purchase during the ensuing water year, and a recommendation as to the quantity of water needed for surface delivery and for replenishment of the groundwater supplies of the district for the ensuing year.

(f) Such other information as the district desires.”

Water Code § 75574 pertains to a water dis-

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Residents Militating To Stop The Momentum Toward USFS/Tribe Land Exchange *from page 19*

trict's authority or water conservation district's authority to levy on local water users a water replenishment fee above and beyond charges for specific water use.

Under Water Code § 75574, "The board shall, before the levy of the groundwater charge, find and determine all of the following:

(a) The average annual overdraft for the immediate past 10 water years.

(b) The estimated annual overdraft for the current water year.

(c) The estimated annual overdraft for the ensuing water year.

(d) The accumulated overdraft as of the last day of the preceding water year.

(e) The estimated accumulated overdraft as of the last day of the current water year.

(f) The estimated amount of agricultural water to be withdrawn from the groundwater supplies of the district for the ensuing water year.

(g) The amount of water other than agricultural water to be drawn from the groundwater supplies of the district for the ensuing water

year.

(h) The estimated amount of water necessary for surface distribution for the ensuing water year.

(i) The amount of water which is necessary for the replenishment of the groundwater supplies of the district.

(j) The amount of water the district is obligated by contract to purchase."

The proposed land exchange will provide the tribe with property over which, upon which and under which water descending from the San Bernardino Mountains naturally flows into the Bunker Hill Basin and will thereby enable it, if it so chooses, to divert a considerable amount of that water to its own use and deprive the Bunker Hill Basin of natural water recharge it would receive.

There does not appear to be any arrangement to spell out what future diversions of water will take place nor an effort to put in place any requirement that the tribe be subject to any water replenishment charges for water it diverts at the point of the property that is being conveyed to it as a consequence of the land swap. Given the tribe's status as a sovereign nation, there is concern that it would consider itself or hold itself to be exempt from the water replenishment charges that would oth-

erwise be applicable under Water Code § 75574 to an entity that made such diversions. Local residents want a clear determination as to whether the tribe will agree to either forego making such diversions altogether or waive its sovereign immunity so that it is required to pay replenishment fees to the water districts with jurisdiction within the Bunker Hill Basin if such diversions are made.

Another principle at stake is whether the standard enunciated in the precedent-setting case pertaining to the determination of water rights to the Hallett Creek Stream System in Northern California, which was decided by the California Supreme Court in 1988, applies to the situation regarding the water rights attached to the property to be obtained by the tribe as a consequence of the land trade. The Hallett Creek case pitted the California State Water Resources Control Board, as the petitioner and appellant, against the U.S. Government, as the claimant and respondent, and the Sierra Club, as an intervener and respondent.

Under the guideline laid down in the Hallett Creek Stream System case, the Water Resources Board was found to have the power to determine "the scope, nature and priority" of the unexercised federally-

held riparian [i.e., water] rights consistent with the board's judgment as to what is "reasonably necessary to the promotion of the state's interest in fostering the most reasonable and beneficial use" of its water resources. While that ruling did not authorize the State Water Resources Board to extinguish altogether a future riparian water right, it did grant it authority to prohibit the exercising of such a right if it prevented the beneficial use of that water in a reasonable manner by another party. It would thus appear that, despite the tribe's sovereignty, the California Water Resources Board would, under the Hallett Creek Stream System precedent, still have the authority to prevent the tribe from diverting the water that would otherwise flow into the Bunker Hill Basin if it were determined that recharging the Bunker Hill Basin constituted "the most reasonable and beneficial use" of the water flowing down from the San Bernardino Mountains at that point.

Since in the Hallett Creek Stream System case the United States did not contest the rule and that its riparian right was unexercised and subject to subordination, it would appear the California Water Resources Board, at least theoretically, may evaluate the proposed use in the con-

text of other uses and determine whether the riparian use should be permitted in light of the state's interest in promoting the most efficient and beneficial use of the state's waters.

In the proposed land exchange between the Forest Service and the tribe, it does not appear that either party has filed an application with the California State Water Resources Control Board in compliance with the standard enunciated in the "In re Water of Hallett Creek Stream System" case.

In addition, there does not appear to be anything put forth so far by either the Forest Service or the tribe to establish the land exchange will result in water use that is compliant with both the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and Governor Gavin Newsom's October 2021 proclamation expanding the declaration of the statewide drought emergency and the accompanying intensification of water conservation efforts, a number of local residents and environmentalists contend. They want the Forest Service and the tribe to put compliance with both as defined conditions of the exchange.

Residents have complained that Assemblyman Ramos's letter in support of the exchange, done in his official capacity as the Assemblyman

representing the San Bernardino Valley in the State of California's lower legislative house, constitutes a conflict of interest. Not only is Ramos a member of the San Manuel Tribe who draws a substantial amount of income from the tribe's commercial operations, including its casino and resort, but prior to his tenure as San Bernardino County Third District Supervisor from 2012 to 2018, which preceded his service in the California Assembly, he was the San Manuel tribal chairman.

Supervisor Rowe has likewise found herself chastised for her endorsement of the plan, which was made in a letter dated the same day as Ramos's. In response to protests lodged by a number of her constituents living in the confines of the Bunker Hill Basin, Rowe, in an email dated February 15, 2023, gave indication she, perhaps, had not fully thought the issue through when she made her January 24 recommendation in support of the exchange.

"I sincerely appreciate you bringing this matter to my attention," she wrote. "I have forwarded your concerns to County Counsel for further review."

County Counsel is the San Bernardino County governmental structure's stable of in-house attorneys.

Hernandez's Survival As CEO Likely To Come Down To His Symbiosis With Hagman *from page 18*

tant as recently as a year ago has cooled considerably and might even be described as lukewarm.

Hagman, who is yet the dominant personage on the board despite Rowe's role as chairwoman, remains key to Hernandez's survivability. Under the term limits that were in place when he was elected in 2014, Hagman is due to leave office as supervisor in 2026, at the end of his third term. Yet the wording of the provision pertaining to term limits

contained in Measure D passed by the county's voters three-and-a-half months ago can be interpreted in such a way that Hagman could now be entitled to serve three more terms as supervisor. It remains to be seen whether he will pursue a legal determination on that question and test whether he can indeed ask the Fourth District's voters to retain him in office another four years in 2026 and perhaps again in 2030 and maybe even again in 2034. If Hernandez, as county chief executive officer, uses his authority to have county counsel assist Hagman in such a pursuit, Hagman may deem it in his own interest to keep Hernandez in place.

On the other hand, Hagman, who has been characterized by more than just a few as a career politician, might consider it a better move to move on to another political office, perhaps by running for the California State Senate or U.S. Congress. If that is the case, he may deem it in his interest that the county engage in dynamic action over the next two to four years, which will burnish his image as a politician of accomplishment and perhaps render him more electable to higher office. In that case, Hernandez's usefulness to Hagman may have come to an end. If, indeed, Hagman has come to the conclusion that it is time to ca-

shier Hernandez, he will no doubt be able to scare up two votes to add to his own to do that.

There are other considerations, ones both above and below the surface.

It is impossible to ignore Hernandez's already demonstrated ruthlessness and instinct for professional survival and advancement. There is indication that just as he was previously, he is now more than prepared to step over or kick to the curb the county employees down the chain of command by threatening to fire them or indeed actually terminating them if he perceives doing so to be in his interest. There are indications that in order to remain in

place he is equally willing to pull the trigger or at least threaten to pull the trigger on his political masters up the chain of command. Rumors abound that he made book on the members of the board of supervisors while he was chief operating officer and has continued to do so while he is serving as chief executive officer, a vantage point from which he is excellently positioned to observe corners being cut, the way decisions are made, what arrangements have been made and what political horse-trading has taken place in backrooms or during closed sessions. And just as he and Blakemore were able to maneuver the lawsuit the board of

supervisors filed against its own clerk into the courtroom of a Superior Court Judge who had a few secrets that judge did not want exposed which were exploited to obtain a determination that kept the supervisors from losing their quarter of a million dollars a year compensation, Hernandez may prove himself to not be above holding back a thing or two that he knows about the supervisors to remind them that it might be best all-around to let him keep his job and the \$336,561.82 in salary, \$40,746.20 in pay additions and perquisites and \$196,035.72 in benefits he receives for a current total annual compensation of \$573,343.74.