

These minutes are not intended to be a verbatim transcription of the proceedings and discussion associated with the business on the Commission's agenda; rather, what follows is a summary of the order of business and general nature of testimony, Commission deliberation, and action taken. Votes are shown in abbreviated format when unanimous (Ayes-Noes-Abstain).

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

A. Roll Call

Chair Cox called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Members Present: Commissioners Brownfield, Burke, Corbett, Cox, Grossman-Crist*, and Johnson; Alternate Commissioner Kasper

Members Absent: Commissioner Gogan; Alternate Commissioners Carpenter-Harris and Harper.

Staff Present: Colette Santsche, Executive Officer (EO), and Amber Chung, Clerk/Analyst

* Attended via Zoom and was seated as a voting member due to "just clause" provision

2. PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Presentation of Case Study by Kristin Dobbin on Lewiston Community Services District's Consolidation of Lewiston Park Mutual Water Company

Kristin Dobbin, Assistant Cooperative Extension Specialist with UC Berkeley, provided a presentation to the Commission on the consolidation of Lewiston Park Mutual Water Company and Lewiston Community Services District (CSD), formally completed in 2018. She provided a background of her work, explaining she recently conducted 10-12 case studies on water system consolidations across the state to assess outcomes and analyze how consolidation can advance local and state goals pertaining to the provision of drinking water. Commissioners asked various questions, including: 1) whether any efficiencies have been identified to make consolidation efforts less intensive and costly on rural, volunteer-run water system providers; 2) what proximity systems would need to be in relation to each other in order for consolidation to be feasible; 3) what drew Kristin to study the Lewiston area; and 4) if, looking back, Kristin had any recommendations or interventions that would've made the Lewiston consolidation easier, more effective, or less costly.

Representatives from Lewiston CSD including Board President Mary Nixon and Board Secretary Dorothy Pelton were in attendance. Mary provided comment on her personal experiences during the consolidation process, noting that the project would not have been possible without the state funding and the hard work of retired District General Manager, Mel Deardorff. Her takeaway from the project was that it was necessary and effective, but now the District is left without the ability to staff the updated water system since it requires a Grade 3 Wastewater Operator, whose salary they can't afford to pay. She expressed that consolidation with Weaverville's system should be considered, and that the state should put money into larger consolidation projects like this.

The Commission thanked Ms. Dobbin for the presentation. No action necessary or taken.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of Minutes from November 4, 2025 Special Commission Meeting

No Commissioner comments or questions.

Motion to approve the consent calendar by Alternate Commissioner Kasper, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and deemed invalid by LAFCo staff since Alternate Commissioner Kasper was not seated as a voting member.

Motion to approve the consent calendar by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Commissioner Grossman-Crist, and passed by 6-0-0 roll call vote.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

No public comment was provided.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

6. BUSINESS

A. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for 2026

EO Santsche introduced the staff report and noted that Chair Cox had expressed interest in continuing to be chair for the 2026 calendar year.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Cox as Chair for 2026 by Commissioner Corbett, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and passed by a 6-0-0 roll call vote.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Johnson as Vice-Chair for 2026 by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Commissioner Corbett, and passed by a 6-0-0 roll call vote.

B. Mid-Year Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2025-26

EO Santsche introduced the staff report and explained that nearly all apportionments from member contributions have been received and that no applications are anticipated for the rest of the fiscal year.

No Commissioner questions. No action necessary or taken.

C. Summary of Down River Regional Fire Service Provider Meeting

EO Santsche introduced the staff report and provided the highlights from a recent meeting held with Willow Creek Fire Protection District (located in Humboldt County), Junction City FPD, Salyer CSD, Hawkins Bar Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), and Down River VFD. EO Santsche explained the shared challenges of providing fire services in this region, particularly centered around providing services along the SR 299 corridor. She noted that Willow Creek FPD is spearheading coordination with state representatives, state and federal agencies, and local governments/departments providing services along the 299 corridor, from Lord Ellis to Junction City. No action necessary or taken.

D. Commercial Timberlands Report

EO Santsche introduced the staff report and outlined recent legislative and stakeholder coordination efforts focused on addressing the statutory treatment of commercial timberlands located in State Responsibility Areas within fire protection districts. Commissioners expressed appreciation for EO Santsche's work on this topic and asked clarifying questions about the magnitude of impact of this issue on Trinity County. EO Santsche stated that at this time, there does not appear to be a fiscal impact on fire districts within the County, but that this topic could become an issue during future annexation or district formation proceedings as there is no clear definition of what constitutes "commercial forest lands which are timbered lands" in Fire Protection District law.

Commissioners and EO Santsche discussed and clarified the process of funding fire services in Trinity County via property and special taxes. No action necessary or taken.

E. LAFCo Code of Conduct Policy Update

EO Santsche introduced the staff report and noted that Trinity LAFCo did not currently have a section related to Commissioner decorum and responsibilities. Commissioners asked clarifying questions. EO Santsche proposed a change to Item 1.13.1(a)(5) and stated it would read as "Keep remarks and discussion relevant, concise, and limited to properly noticed agenda items and matters within the Commission's authority" instead of "Keep remarks relevant, concise, and limited to agenda items during meetings".

Motion to approve the addition of Section 1.13 "Responsibilities of Commissioners" with the update to 1.13.1(a)(5) by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Commissioner Grossman-Crist, and passed by a 6-0-0 voice vote.

7. EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE (Information Only)

A. Form 700 and Ethics Training

Clerk Chung introduced the staff report and explained the various training and certification requirements of Commissioners. Chair Cox inquired about whether CALAFCO would be offering a free SB 827 fiscal and financial training; EO Santsche responded that she would be looking into this and would provide an update at the next Commission meeting.

B. Brown Act Update

EO Santsche introduced the staff report and provided an update on the recent changes to the Brown Act and how they affect the Commission. Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding the revised "just cause" provision.

C. Status of Expiring Commissioner Terms

Clerk Chung introduced the staff report and indicated that Commissioner Corbett and Alternate Commissioner Harper's seats would be expiring on June 30, 2026. Staff stated they would be beginning the special district member call for nomination process and would provide an update at the next Commission meeting.

D. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

No Commissioner comments.

E. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Cox adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm.

ATTEST:

Amber Chung, Clerk

DATE: _____