

Public Expression January 5, 2021

Good morning Chair Gjerde and members of the Board. Congratulations and best wishes for success to you all, but especially to Supervisors Mulheren and McGourty as you embark on your new responsibilities. With a new Chair and two new Board members I'm optimistic you will embrace the policy setting role of the Board of Supervisors.

With the Covid related increased work load, I believe the Board cannot meet its current obligations with only two or three meetings a month, yet it's clear the hard working Clerk of the Board staff cannot take on more. I encourage the Board to identify the financial and personnel resources that are necessary to stay abreast of the many critical issues facing the Board.

The Grand Jury issued a report in 2019 titled *Who Runs Mendocino County* that concluded the Board does not adequately track Board Directives. It's clear the Board issues more directives than can be fulfilled with current staff resources. As a result, the Administration, not the Board, often decides which directives will be implemented. It may be appropriate to appoint an ad hoc committee to review the many directives and prioritize those that are most timely, critical or achievable.

Phase Three of the cannabis program, originally scheduled to open January 1, 2020 has been indefinitely delayed pending adoption of a land use based permitting system. Without a Phase Three ordinance potential new applicants and legacy growers who did not previously apply have no opportunity to do so. Without a Phase Three ordinance Mendocino County will lose millions of dollars annually in tax revenue, a majority of which is pledged to fire and ems, enforcement, mental health and roads.

The Board gave direction to have an agenda item regarding the Project Homekey development that would allow the Board to hear public concerns and consider adoption of conditions to mitigate those concerns. Although Project Homekey is on today's agenda, there is no option for the Board to consider conditions. This displays an apparent lack of respect for the public as well as the Board.

More examples could be cited. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

John McCowen

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