



COUNTY OF LAKE

Board of Supervisors

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MOKE SIMON
District 1 Supervisor

PRESS RELEASE **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

County Insights: Moke Simon, Chair of the Board of Supervisors

LAKE COUNTY, Calif. (March 17, 2020) – The first item listed in the Lake County Board of Supervisors’ Vision 2028 Statement is, “Consider and promote the well-being and economic resilience of every Lake County resident.” With COVID-19 at the forefront of everyone’s thoughts, the Board met Tuesday, to take important action to ensure County residents have access to the Lake County-specific information they need to stem the spread of the virus, and enable continuity of County services that will facilitate future prosperity.

Board Chair Moke Simon offered some comments on a meeting that saw the Board acting with unity and strength to support Lake County’s communities.

“First thing’s first, we take the threat of COVID-19 very seriously,” affirmed Simon. “We have to keep Lake County residents safe, particularly the most vulnerable. Dr. Pace and our whole Health Services team have been doing a great job of looking a couple of steps ahead, seeing what [public health officials] in the Bay Area are doing, where more people are sick, and partnering with our Board, our City Governments, local hospitals and clinics, and others as they make some tough decisions. We are committed to keeping the public and partner agencies informed.”

“Whether you believe [in the restrictions] wholeheartedly or not, our opportunity is now,” continued Simon. “We have very limited resources in Lake County, and if this thing spikes like in other Counties, there may be trouble. Our lives need to change over the next 3-4 weeks. As you are making decisions whether to go out, be responsible, make sure any trips are essential. Care for yourself, your friends, your family. People being irresponsible, that’s not what we need right now. A lot of businesses are hurting, but things are going to change, and acting now is our best chance to [limit the impact].”

“Realistically, we’re still at the beginning of this thing,” observed Simon. “Ordering the closure of all public schools for four weeks was a tough decision, but in some areas, they are expecting to be out of school closer to two months. As Dr. Pace said today, because of limited testing, we don’t really know whether COVID-19 is active in our communities, and the more people interact, the more probable it is that the virus will spread. Acting today to close our Libraries, where we have people of different generations interacting every day, was an important step, and we will continue to be aggressive.”

The Board unanimously voted to ratify Sheriff Martin’s Emergency Proclamation and adopt a Resolution robustly supporting suspension of evictions for residents unable to pay rent as a direct consequence of COVID-19. Board members also expressed their

intention to support creative problem solving to enable broad electronic access to Board meetings, and continuation of as many County services as can be responsibly provided.

Speaking of County leadership's role, Simon noted:

"I can assure you we are as committed to [limiting the spread of the virus] as our healthcare workers. Hours of operation may change, availability of counter services may diminish. Dr. Pace mentioned we have only eight ventilators in the County, so we all have to do our part."

In other business, the Board affirmed Director Scott De Leon's plan to prepare his Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget and staffing allocations in a manner that consolidates administrative and other needs, where appropriate, of the three departments he is currently directing: Public Works, Community Development and Water Resources.

"It's too soon to make a decision to consolidate those departments," stated Simon, "but we need to be prepared, and Scott said it will be easier to respond with flexibility approaching it this way. The culture change that is happening on the 3rd floor has been really impressive, and that is [a testament to] Scott's leadership and all of the workers in the department. The Public is singing the praise of what is happening up there in CDD, homeowners' [perspectives] are completely changed. This month, we have three Planning Commission meetings on the calendar, and things are getting done."

Video footage of Tuesday's Board meeting can be viewed at:

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

Recent Press Releases and Public Health Orders from Dr. Pace and more Lake County-focused information are available at <http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus.htm>, and accessible through the County's homepage, <http://www.lakecountyca.gov/>.

If you have public health-related questions about COVID-19, please direct them to MHOAC@lakecountyca.gov, or call Public Health, at 707-263-1090. After hours and weekend **urgent or emergency** questions can be directed to 707-349-4104.