

Instructions to Candidates: ***Please provide your written responses before the end of the Sunday before the scheduled Zoom call for your District.*** Your responses will be posted on our website and on YouTube for voters to review. The forum moderators will select one of your responses and ask for additional detail during the forum. Thanks in advance for your participation!

- With the County's on-going struggle to fund its budget, how would you propose to either reduce the County's expenditures and/or increase the County's revenues? What services could be reduced or cut, to reduce expenditures? Where and how might revenues be increased?

LC: I think there are several areas that could be evaluated to reduce expenses within the county. Some small items from a cost perspective would be to remove committees that are not performing according to their charter or provide regular analysis results to the supervisors. This may also alleviate some county personnel that assist with these committees.

Another option is to reassess contracts with external companies and re-evaluate if in fact an existing employee has the skills and bandwidth to accomplish the task. We have some very talented people working in our county offices, and hopefully they are afforded opportunities to leverage existing skill sets or expand their skills as needed.

One example of this is the current effort in the planning department to assess information from the state related to the safety element of the general plan. There is a contract with an outside agency that was signed in Feb./March 2023. Then in December 2023 there was a \$55k increase approved, to a total contract amount of \$270k.

Regarding the increase in revenue, it would be great to see more local businesses launch and thrive, keeping people working where they live. I think that fees required for a business to start should be evaluated to ensure they encourage business growth and are not prohibitive. Also, processes within our government offices should work efficiently to support the efforts of our citizens.

I believe we could also evaluate some of the resources representing the history and culture of our county that could be emphasized to encourage attraction in tourism.

- What is your position on the proposed Costco development in EDH and why? What benefits & drawbacks do you see this project having on EDC?

LC: I am not opposed to Costco, even though I think it is very close to the one in Folsom that I already go to. The plan continues to change, most recently changing from being Costco and self-storage along with retail and office space, to resubmission to include 304 multi-family units.

It will create convenience for citizens of the county and, although there is potential for some sales tax revenue, what is not clear yet in the proposal is how much the county will have to pay for anything in support of the project.

One of my primary concerns is specific to roads and congestion, particularly located so close to schools on Silva Valley. In the notice of Draft EIR and Scoping meeting in 2021, the project overview and plans include an assumption of the Country Club Drive Extension (CIP 36105008). Within the Approved FY23/24 Capital Improvement Program that project does not reflect that revenue is available to cover. A lot of those types of improvements require revenue from the county taxpayers, or through other tax-based sources, so should be prioritized based on available funds, and the priorities from the community.

There are a lot of complexities and potential conditions of approval that will be needed. It is difficult to fully evaluate them when the project proposals continue to change. Once approved, there needs to be continued monitoring to align the different requirements of the project before it is completed.

- In the last couple of years, the Planning and Building Dept has come under scrutiny to the point of there even being a Grand Jury investigation. What are your thoughts on the results of this investigation, the current BOS' response to this, and what would you do to improve the shortcomings of this department?

LC: I was very impressed by the information produced by the grand jury. They did a great job evaluating different types of input and formulated concise areas of focus.

Some of the responses from Supervisors, as well as discussion with CAO office missed some of the points for the overall concerns. As an example, in the BOS Response document the first concern was a missing mission statement for planning and building departments, with the clarification that they have different functions. The response was they are two divisions with the same mission, working closely together. That does not resolve the confusion from citizens on when they need to work with the different departments.

Quite a few of the issues are related to the software solution that is being used. In the response there are references to functions that are not available or being evaluated with anticipated resolution sometime in 2024. As someone who has implemented technical solutions, I am aware that the right solution cannot be determined without well defined business processes. There is risk that if in order to implement something in the tool they have to create branch exception processes, then it results in potentially disparate workstreams that are not efficient.

A potential solution would be to combine planning and building services, determine where there are overlaps of required expertise to ensure the right personnel are working on items, and refine procedures to streamline the entire process.

Side note on Grand Jury findings: I think it is critical to ensure that the county is resolving issues to the satisfaction of the requesters. According to Grand Jury standards, a new group will evaluate the findings and solutions of the prior year. Sometimes they are done, and sometimes they are not. That leaves some open items lingering from prior years if only a year over year review is completed.

As an example, I wrote to the board of supervisors near the end of last year asking what their guidelines were for consent agenda items, since they had nothing on the website. Then on December 12th they approved Consent Calendar Policy to be included in the policy manual. As I was reviewing the current Grand Jury response I looked back through prior years and discovered an item reported in 2010/2011. That item was not resolved until now.

- Would you support the building of the proposed Alder Creek Dam? What are the benefits or deterrents of this project as you see it?

LC: I was not aware until now of the proposed Alder Creek Dam project, however I do support reasonable solutions to help with effective water management. I will have to investigate it further, but some of my questions would focus on the funding and realistic potential of it being approved before allocating a lot of resources to conduct the analysis. That would include ensuring that we would not be limited by state regulations that would prevent implementation.

I also want to review the justification behind it, to ensure that our county, particularly agriculture, would benefit from the building of the dam.

- Wildfires are an ongoing concern for the citizens of EDC. CalFire has implemented what some might consider very restrictive and even intrusive regulations. The County is also looking at codifying its own set of fire prevention regulations. Do you feel this is appropriate, or not, and why?

LC: I do not think that some of the regulations being implemented against personal property owners are appropriate. I realize that Caldor hit our community hard, but we have had fires before and I see some of the activities as an overreaction. We must remember that our hills, mountains and rural areas are part of our character and the reason why people buy property here. If we change that, then an individual's investment may be severely impacted and people that may have grown up here may decide they do not want to stay.

I also think that it is an attempt to resolve some of the issues related to insurance, however there is no guarantee that an insurance company will still cover even after significant removal of brush or trees. It would be good to understand "why" companies are declining coverage or moving out of the state, then leverage in discussions with the insurance commissioner. If we as a county could open up the market to different insurers, then that would be worthwhile to research and implement.

There also seems to be a lack of consistency in the purpose behind these regulations and other items that the supervisors authorize. Several development projects have been approved along Pleasant Valley Road, which is consistently brought up by citizens and planning as a potential evacuation route danger, yet the projects still sit pending rather than being denied.

Finally, while citizens are being penalized, our forest is still not being managed or maintained.

- Do you support the concept of a 'constitutional' sheriff? Why or why not?

LC: Yes, I do. It is critical for the citizens to know there is someone examining if something is truly constitutional, supporting their rights and liberties.

- Recently, the Ranch Marketing Ordinance has been under scrutiny because of the accessory uses allowed to ranchers and farmers "by right" such as non-agriculture events. In some circumstances landowners were taking advantage of the fact that specific use definitions were not defined. Do you feel that the matter is covered appropriately now, or do you feel it needs to be explored more?

LC: I am aware of the changes made to the Ranch Marketing Ordinance last year, which I believe was initiated due to a lack of clarification about amplified sound and hours. To be honest, I know we have a sound ordinance in the county, so was not sure of the background on why it was initiated. During my review of the changes, I found it odd that they were also changing or clarifying the use of different buildings on properties. It makes sense to me that an owner may create a building for a particular use, but over the years may repurpose it for something else. I think having that option is crucial for operations.

I realize that Ranch Marketing is necessary to supplement revenue received from goods, and it is an amazing way to leverage our farms and ranches in the county for locals as well as tourists. If there are too many limitations during a season when crops were not abundant, then it is difficult for farms to stay viable. If updates to the ordinance are done by personnel or supervisors that are not a farm, winery or ranch owner, then it is potentially detrimental to our property owners. There will always be people that push boundaries of being good neighbors, but everyone else should not be penalized for that.