

Public Comment #1

BOS Rcvd 4-8-25

From: Leo Bennett-Cauchon <leobennettcauchon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 8:43 AM
To: BOS-District I; BOS-District II; BOS-District III; BOS-District IV; BOS-District V; BOS-Clerk of the Board
Subject: 4/8/25 Agenda item 1

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Good morning Supervisors:

The following (from online transcript) is to accompany my oral comments at today's meeting. I will be asking that you clarify your minutes by summarizing the commitments to the public made on 4/1/25. Please provide brief directions to your staff to have an agenda item at the next Budget discussion concerning the questions asked about items 7 and 8,

Sincerely,
Leo Bennett-Cauchon
916 307-8525

"Good morning supervisors my name is Lee Tannen i'm the president of the El Dorado County Taxpayers Association i'm here to request that items seven and eight be pulled from the consent calendar these are not routine items they are significant financial actions that deserve public transparency and open discussion the public deserves an opportunity to provide their input but let me speak directly to item 8 and section 504 of the county charter section 504 was created specifically to ensure that deputy sheriff one and two

positions remain competitively compensated with comparable sworn law enforcement roles in other counties that's a legitimate and limited purpose but what this board is doing now and what has been doing for years is stretching 504 far beyond its original intent the misuse of 504 didn't start today the county has been gradually expanding its application for years applying it to nonsworn staff who are never intended to be covered by it this current action simply pushes that expansion even further the attachments to item 8 reveal a list of non-sworn positions being swept into 504 process including county attorneys administrative managers analysts and even the CEO these employees are not deputies they don't wear a badge or face the same field risks yet under the banner of 504 they're being granted raises as high as 35% with some increases reaching \$30,000 or more per person this is happening while the county faces a \$20 million deficit that's the irony you've cut tourism and economic development you're warning residents about potential tax increases and at the same time you're using a law enforcement compensation mechanism to deliver massive payraises to well paid administrative professionals this isn't physical discipline it's backdoor spending section 504 was never designed to be a blanket salary adjustment tool for internal staff expanding it in this way without oversight without public explanation is simply wrong and burying it in the consent calendar that's not transparency that's maneuvering if these raises are necessary then explain them publicly justify the reclassifications show the public why this is responsible budgeting but don't hide it in the consent calendar again I respectfully urge this board to pull items seven and eight from the consent calendar open them for full discussion and explain to the

taxpayers of Elorodo County why section 504 continues to be expanded and misapplied especially during a financial crisis because right now that doesn't make sense thank you thank you.

Good morning morning Chris uh also I want to ask for seven and eight to be pulled again for um comments that had been made by your prior speaker but essentially seven let's do it this way seven and eight i read it all every word and this is right on legisar for anybody to see the public can look at it it's it's very obvious that there is implications here implications related to the last speaker but also implications related to the board and the decision making that you make that you do make during board of supervisors meeting from week to week essentially this is your job to be able to discuss these to be consistent to follow our strategic plan of the county and essentially let the public know why on one week you can talk about a \$20 million shortfall in our annual budget that we might be facing and on the other week you bring items related to bargaining units former county employee managers association founder i understand the ramifications here and why you need to bring an item like this forward but you have to put it together and be able to discuss it in a broad sense and I and I feel this is a mistake to do it on consent calendar and I would tell you this based on my advice not because I gain anything from it thank you. ...

Ruth Michaelsson good morning board thank you for taking my call i wanted to say that I concur with what Lee Tannenbomb of the taxpayers association had to say and I also concur with what Chris Payne had to say but now I speak as an individual i also want to talk about item seven and eight on the consent calendar and what I wanted to talk about with um item seven if you go to the staff report and you look at the financial impact statement of \$925,000 100 but saying that it's going to be offset by um salary savings so as a lay person I interpret that salary savings to mean positions that haven't been filled and um will remain unfilled and that's how it's going to bring it down to a cost of \$272,000 but you know when you give raises those are in perpetuity it's not a one-time cost that's in perpetuity and so I'm just wondering if you're if you're anticipating in perpetuity keeping these positions unfilled and so what it really means is you have fewer people to do the work you're paying them more and is that the direction that you want to go in because it seems a little false that you can take this formula and assume it's going to stay that way forever someone had those positions um requested those positions for some needed purpose I assume and not just as extra frills so that's something I want you to look at um you know I have I have mixed feelings about this because I do think that employees need to be adequately paid to be able to retain them i understand that and the county has a big problem in recruiting and retaining employees and I'd like to remind you that I did work for the county in the 90s for nine years for the department of transportation so I have sort of an inside view about that but I agree with the others that um this is quite a big expense to put on consent and it comes on the tail coats of what you did December 10th this relates December 10th of um 24 item number 44 where you had um approved 2.8 8 million in salaries and and as Lee Tannon bomb and as Chris Payne had said you know you're facing a \$20 million deficit um so with 30 seconds left I just think you need to look at the proportion of all of this um look at the this is a continual not a one-time cost and really look at the big picture um and also I hope the rank and file are getting their raises as well i know this item number seven is for management um and again a sheriff's a sheriff's correctional lieutenant all right that's the end of my time but thank you for hearing me.

Good morning Chair Turnbo and supervisors thank you uh just echoing the uh this is Kevin McCartY resident of district 2 and director of the taxpayers association of El Dorado County uh calling in to echo the comments about items number seven and 8 uh these should properly be duly agendaized and opened up uh for public comment uh as noted by the other commenters it would be one thing if we had a

budget surplus and we were flushed with cash and you know we had the opportunity to properly compensate the uh the people of this county that are working hard uh but we are as noted facing a budget shortfall in a private business if you ask for a salary increase when a company's losing money I know cuz I've done it many times the answer is generally not going to be yes and again we we recognize and value the input of these employees and these managers but we really need to at least uh open this up for discussion this belongs as an agendaized item uh so that we can properly review it uh as an individual item and discuss the impacts and and consider it in the greater fiscal situation of the county uh so I would urge the board uh to consider this and just open it up for public comment on the regular agenda thank you have a great day

Hi this is Leo Bennett Cauchon Pollock Pines i would like to add my voice to the citizens that are requesting that you pull seven and eight from the consent agenda it takes just one supervisor to do that and I hope that one of you will hear the voice of the various citizens that are concerned about the fiscal impacts of these two items you've heard many good points i would like to add my voice specifically to item seven uh you spent a long time back in February a couple of hours um talking about an item concerning the transit occupancy tax and your various income drivers among the tourism agencies and the film commission so to me to talk about the item that shows like for the you add them both together it's about 1.5 million uh over time and it's about a 6% according to the great report from your chief administrative office as was referenced back in December you gave a 5.71% increase to the deputies the board is led by example tightening its belt for some of the financial supports you receive for your service a percentage increase to the highest management usually translates into a lot more dollars than a percentage increase to our wonderful line deputies all of this is stuff that warrants a full transparent and fiscally prudent conversation I feel that you should also be taking a look at your five-year forecasts for the general fund so you know how this plays out as has been pointed out you're having to make tough decisions and to lock in a pay raise at this point doesn't seem fiscally prudent and also to me the norm is that management comes last when it comes to pay lead by example pay increases and when I look on the county website there's still labor agreements that have not been posted so I think for all these reasons I would ask that you listen to the voice of the citizens and again that one supervisor show the courage to take we are not in normal times let's talk about this more thank you for taking my comments

Oh my apologies thank you I too would like to see items seven and eight pulled from the uh consent calendar uh with the \$20 million deficit and public sector workforce inflation adjusted wages are down 2% and looking at the data with regards to what is being proposed here it equates to nearly a 6% increase for management levels within the county offices i would encourage the board to dive into this and understand and explain why these increases are so much higher when the public is incurring nowhere near this type of a raise which would be about an 8% swing and then provide a complete explanation as to why with a \$20 million deficit why we're putting such large raises out there last week I brought up a similar comment in the LAFCO meeting and the two supervisors did discuss it it came back with that that was just below a 2% raise that would just basically keep in line with inflation and uh it was carried forward in that regard the other thing with this with these types of raises long-term costs relative to retirement are going to exponentially increase which will increase your un the county's unfunded pension liabilities uh further down the road so um I strongly encourage the supervisors to pull this and agendaize it and uh really dive into it to understand the cost relative to the current financial system situation with the county thank you.

Now taking public comment from John Esleck. Hi I'm currently the president of the El Dorado County Managers Association and was on a negotiating team for the MOU which is being discussed in consent item number seven I don't think the public is aware that excuse me the BOS the board of supervisors has already met with county HR and the county's uh labor negotiator and already basically evaluated this contract gone over the costs of the contract and the positions and the raises included um the raises that are being offered are consistent with what is being offered to the line level units so the management association isn't getting some lavish raises and then the raises for the individual positions that are above the generalized raises are basically being offered up to fix salaries that are out of whack um I know in the correctional

lieutenant series uh specifically um that one has been going back and forth between the county and the EDCMA since 2019 and the raises are basically getting us up to what we negotiated and agreed to upon in 2019 so the whole the what's written on the MOU and in the agenda item isn't doesn't tell the whole story there's a lot more to it and it's already been discussed behind the scenes with at close session with HR and the county labor negotiators so I don't know that the public's fully aware of that but there's a lot of other factors that go into play in determining these numbers it's not just numbers that were thrown out by the county to give to management employees thank you.

Public comment from Kelly . Good morning hi um glad I caught you on YouTube because yesterday I couldn't find an agenda I thought maybe y'all were off this week um I'm not going to repeat people are making really poignant very practical comments and really it just comes down to once again consent calendar the intention um the importance and I understand that's a lot to get out business but in terms of these items that everybody's referring to 78 the these are discussionary items I think people more than ever in this time of history want to understand how we got to a \$20 million deficit when back in October I believe it was we got our first balance

sheet budget then it goes to 8 million and now we're at 20 million um I don't know if that's oversight I don't know if that's overspending we don't know but the people just need to understand so it's simple um I was glad to hear Leo love it when I agree with

Lao that it just takes one of you I have witnessed in the past where one of you did ask to have conversation and was shut down by another and I thought that was very inconsiderate but I do believe this warrants discussion because sometimes with discussion then we understand and we're not creating false narratives um we're not accusing you of being the bad guy of

overspending I get unions I have to work with unions a lot um I understand collective bargaining and sometimes you're at where you're at because of those bargainings but if people can understand in what you are able to disclose in those bargainings of how we are having this consent item increases it just again it pulls back everybody's spec speculative and pointing fingers at you know you and you as being irresponsible or just spend a holic so I really encourage you to pull these items so that we can have that conversation so that if need be and there are increases that we can come to acceptance of that and maybe if it's not and there's something that we can do to help again close that margin of our very very large deficit that would be great too thank you

Ray Nutting: Well I'm up here in Happy Valley in a massive snowstorm I'm on a satellite and cell phone so this is the first time I've tried to use this um it's nice to see the board of supervisors I haven't viewed you guys in over a long time and it's time that I just say that uh the 504 I co-sponsored it in 1994 in 1993 we faced a \$8 million budget crisis and um public safety was on the table talk of deputy sheriffs was on the table and we quickly found out that you know a \$300 plus million dollar budget and the general fund departments were in um dire straits once we balanced that budget held the public safety harmless um we recognized that uh we needed to do something I co-sponsored the charter negotiated with the deputy sheriff's association and deputies one and two were the only issue on the ballot that issue uh won

overwhelmingly with the voters of El Dorado County and thus the charter was birthed by the citizens voting over 70% and a key component of that I won't mention others but we're focusing on 504 was that we would have the best deputy ones and two probably in the state by securing their pay as connected to four or five other agencies so please understand the history of 504 and you guys are facing the same situation right now supervisors and I understand the position you're in i was four terms on the board i i do have a huge appreciation for what you're facing the most outstanding thing you can do at this time is tell your deputies in patrol cars that are subject to harm that you matter and and and do not connect 504 with any other pay situations it needs to 504 needs to focus on deputies one and two and I know it has grown over the years and um truly I respect your difficult situation but at least give the public an opportunity to discuss it and show your support for deputy one and two as it was demonstrated by the voters in in 1994 thank you.

Supervisor Lane: Thank you chair i think that um the budget is a it's a very large discussion and to take it in little chunks is important i think it's very important that we bring the public along with us because they're going to be part of the solution we all are in this together so even though I understand that seven and eight are negotiated um contracts that we have um that we've put in place they're routinely put on consent um but the public is asking some some very good questions we're going to have a big budget discussion next week and another one two weeks after that and so um if their questions can be brought into the context of those two

presentations not to mention the final budget presentation I would be happy with that but if they can't if they can't if it's a a different topic then I think they should be addressed today so maybe could the CEO

CEO: Yeah I appreciate that i think that we can incorporate excuse me a lot of what was um said and questioned into next week's discussion and it will be answered just I know because we've already been working on that um I will say that neither one of these items provides for additional 504 linkages so I want to clear that up right now um and I don't think that we will really be talking about that next week otherwise it's a it's a complex system um and we can certainly address questions and and how we balance all of this how we balance salary increases with declining revenues and increasing expenses um we're doing it that's our job um we're doing it in a very strategic uh prioritized manner working with the budget ad hoc so all of that next week.

Supervisor Laine: That would be great um I I really want the public's uh questions to be addressed um there's some of the same questions I have as well so um just so the public knows that meeting next week on the 8th is scheduled to be a threehour discussion so we're not going to try to slip anything by anybody this is a negotiated agreement um we good questions let's um let's have the discussion in the context of the bigger budget um next week and thank you to the public for bringing all of these important uh questions and issues forward and it will be the first department matter on the agenda.

Supervisor Veercamp: i just would make one um multi-year um board member as well as Supervisor Laine these numbers just didn't come out of the blue they've been involved in discussions for years and 504 is part of that and it's it's very complicated and the biggest issue with 504 is and I totally agree we need to compensate our deputies in the way and be respectful of of what they earn compared to other agencies because they do the same line of work but then you have something called supervisors that are above them and it all becomes a compaction issue this is again this has been a discussion it has gone on for years and not only at that level but the other levels that we're talking about in seven and eight dealing with county employees that are well below the comparable averages and we're working again to get everybody to a median it's unfortunate but years ago we were there and now we're behind again and uh

it's competition for employees it's it's complicated but we we have to have these positions filled and if we can we can um get to that point through attrition and keep some positions open to maintain that's what we'll be doing but then we're also going to be looking at through our budget discussions ways to enhance revenues also our county is is not a a big um sales tax producer matter of fact that's one of the problems we've got going forward is lack of sales tax and loss of sales tax so um loss of road tax gas tax and so forth so that's how we've gotten here and uh it is a very complicated situation but if we want to have more of the conversation next week these are negotiated agreements and we're not going to I'm not going to talk about the negotiation process that's a close session item and uh hopefully there's some trust in in us that we've made the right decisions in these and they're strategic so anyway if it wants to go to next week then we'll rehash it all next week

Supervisor Turnboo: Yeah i think that's where it should be next week we can talk about it more at that time one of the things I also want to say on uh you know the things that I we've been thinking outside the box all of us right now to try to be bring revenue to our county because itthe two executive orders that President Trump just put in place about opening lobby that have I sent packets and stuff and about policy change that I sent back to Washington DC so everything that he put in place he read my letters he read my information so now as effective tomorrow they're going to start opening logging up in the United States and not import lumber from other countries so this is one of a it's a good step to bring something back to our county that we had logging we used to have 28 mills at one time way back and then it got reduced down to 15 and now we only have one so maybe that's that's a future here to be able to bring revenue so we're all thinking not just me but every one of us sitting here today are thinking outside the box so we can bring new ideas and new technology to our county so anyway I thank you for all your support too so anyway

Supervisor Parlin: all right well with that then I move that we adopt the agenda um with no changes and approve the consent calendar

Supervisor Turnboo: All right is there a second

Supervisor Veercamp: i'll second that with one final comment and that is I'm sorry to the employees that are going to be affected by this in holding off their um settlement so

Supervisor Parlin: we're not we're not holding off anything

Supervisor Veercamp: Seven and eight is

Supervisor Parlin: No we didn't pull them

Supervisor Veercamp: i'm sorry

Supervisor Parlin: No I said with no changes and approved that and then during the budget discussion next week we'll have um an additional topic to kind of explain how we got here and stuff.

Supervisor Turnboo: So okay sorry about that still second ... all those in favor by saying Ay.
All those opposed. Motion carries. ...