



# News from the Board of Directors

## CALAFCO QUARTERLY

February 2022

A  
message  
from the  
Executive  
Director

Greetings from your CALAFCO Board of Directors and Executive Director. As 2022 is underway, there is a lot going on in Sacramento and in CALAFCO. We are happy to bring you all the latest news of the Association.



### CALAFCO BOARD ACTIONS

#### CALAFCO BOARD SELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At their January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting the CALAFCO Board of Directors selected **René LaRoche** as the new Executive Director. The Board, along with the CALAFCO Regional Officers, Administrator, Legal Counsel and current Executive Director interviewed two finalists before the Board made the selection. The finalists were recommended by the Board's Recruitment Committee (Mike Kelley, Anita Paque, Bill Connelly, Margie Mohler, Mike McGill, Clark Alsop and Steve Lucas) who interviewed five candidates forwarded by the professional recruiting firm of Koff & Associates before making the recommendation. The new Executive Director serves as a full-time, at-will employee under contract with the Association.



René LaRoche comes to CALAFCO with a diverse background that includes local government and private sector experience, as well as experience serving on Association Boards of Directors. Most recently, as Clerk of Board of Supervisors in Mariposa County since 2012, she serves as part of the executive management team working closely with the elected and appointed officials in the County. Among other things, she develops and administers the department's budget and acts as a liaison for the County with national, state, and local entities. Previously, René served as development and business manager for Runaway Holiday, LLC where she did software and business development, and served as a web developer for Mountain Arts Design.

René earned a Master's Degree in Public Management from Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Las Vegas Nevada. She is past President of the CA Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Association and an Institute Fellow of the CA State Association of Counties. René will be relocating to the Sacramento area and is scheduled to begin full-time on February 28, with a transition overlap with the current Executive Director of several days per week beginning mid-February through mid-March. She is looking forward to meeting LAFCo staff at the March Staff Workshop and connecting with all LAFCo staff and Commissioners in the near future. René can be reached at [rlaroc@calafco.org](mailto:rlaroc@calafco.org).

### NEW BOARD MEMBER APPOINTED

Also during the January 21 meeting, the Board appointed **Derek McGregor**, Orange LAFCo Public Member, to the CALAFCO Board. Derek fills the unexpired term (through October 2022) of former Board Member David West of Imperial LAFCo, who resigned his Board seat late last year.

### OTHER RECENT BOARD ACTIONS

The Board met virtually on January 21 and in addition to conducting interviews for a new Executive Director in a lengthy closed session and appointing Derek McGregor to the Board, they also took the following actions:

- ✓ Adopted member LAFCo dues for FY 2022-23 (information distributed to member LAFCo staff on February 1)
- ✓ Conducted the 2021 annual dashboard review of the Strategic Plan
- ✓ Accepted the mid-year financial reports
- ✓ Approved amendments to the final section of the Association's Policies, completing the first ever comprehensive review and update of the Association's Policies
- ✓ Received and filed numerous other reports

Additionally, the Board received a report on the status of the Staff Workshop scheduled for March 23 - 25, 2022. It was reported that registration numbers are currently low, about half of what is normal, and unless facility contractual obligations can be reduced, CALAFCO is on track for a net loss of approx. \$36,000. Staff is working on negotiations with the facility to see what can be done to reduce those obligations.

All CALAFCO Board meeting documents are available for member access on the CALAFCO website.

### Welcome to Our Newest Associate Members

*CALAFCO is pleased to welcome two new Silver Associate Members.*

We welcome **Sloan Sakai Yeung & Wong, LLP** as a Silver Associate member. **Sloan Sakai** focuses on public agency law, LAFCo law, employment law, and labor/personnel relations. They currently serve as general counsel to Sacramento and Napa LAFCos and have provided special counsel to LAFCos, special districts, cities, and counties throughout California.

To learn more about **Sloan Sakai**, visit their website at [www.sloansakai.com](http://www.sloansakai.com) or contact **DeeAnne Gillick** at [dgillick@sloansakai.com](mailto:dgillick@sloansakai.com).

## Sloan Sakai

Sloan Sakai Yeung & Wong LLP

We also welcome **Terranomics Consulting (TC)** as a Silver Associate member. **TC** provides consulting services for



urban and environmental planning, community and economic development, and GIS. More specifically, their primary activities include urban land economics, business geography, market and feasibility studies, housing studies, grant development and air dispersion modeling. For more information about *TC*, contact *Vince Zaragoza* at 661-421-2312 or by email at [terrnomics@hotmail.com](mailto:terrnomics@hotmail.com).

### CALAFCO Educational Events

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING CALAFCO EDUCATIONAL EVENTS!**

#### CALAFCO 2022 STAFF WORKSHOP

Join us **March 23- 25** at the **Hyatt Regency Newport Beach John Wayne Airport** when we get LAFCo staff together for the Workshop. It's been so long since we've gathered in person and the time is finally here! All Workshop details including info about the program, registration and hotel reservations are posted on the CALAFCO website.

**Deadline to register for the Workshop is March 9 and hotel reservation cutoff date is February 22.**

#### CALAFCO UNIVERSITY

We are pleased to continue offering webinars at no cost to our members. **We are rescheduling** the webinar originally scheduled for **February 23** on **Best Practices for Hiring in the New World (Post-Pandemic)** to a date in the near future. We will feature a labor/employment law attorney, recruiting firm executive, and an Executive Officer, all of whom will share the myriad of things we need to know as we navigate the new (and wild) labor market seeking the best candidates in this post-pandemic world. Watch for the new date and time of this great webinar coming soon.



Details for all CALAFCO University courses are on the CALAFCO website. We have a webinar on-demand library on the CALAFCO website inside the members section containing 16 webinars. CALAFCO members can access these webinars at any time for free using your member access website login credentials.

### CALAFCO Administrative Update

A reminder the **2021 CKH Guides** are now available. You can download an electronic copy from the CALAFCO website or place an order for printed hard copies. You will



find all the details on the CALAFCO website at [www.calafco.org](http://www.calafco.org).

CALAFCO is also doing the annual update of the **membership directory**, so please be sure to get your information to Jeni Tickler at [jtickler@calafco.org](mailto:jtickler@calafco.org).

#### STATEWIDE DUC MAPPING PROJECT COMPLETE

We are very pleased to report the update of the statewide map of disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) has been completed. The map will be updated every 5 years pursuant to statute. Further, the statewide map of LAFCos (by county) that links each county to your respective LAFCo website is also updated. CALAFCO is grateful to our Associate Member partner **RSG, Inc.** for undertaking this project. We especially thank **Jim Simon, Wesley Smith, Dianna Dunne-Vecchio** and **Jocelyn Sanchez**. We also thank **Seth Hendrick** of **Matson & Isom Technologies**, our web host, for their assistance with this mapping project.

You can find the DUC map on the [CALAFCO website here](#) and the [LAFCo-link map here](#).

### LAFCos in the News

#### Congratulations to another retiree

After 21 years of serving Napa LAFCo as Commission Clerk, **Kathy Mabry** is retiring. Kathy has served Napa LAFCo with distinction over her long career with many accomplishments. She also served on many CALAFCO event planning teams for Staff Workshops and Conferences. We are grateful for her service and many contributions locally and statewide, and wish Kathy all the best in her retirement.



#### Los Angeles LAFCo Mourns the Loss of Former Commissioner Richard Close



**Commissioner Close** served on LA LAFCo from 1996-2021 in the special seat for the San Fernando Valley Area Member. He was a leader for years in the valley secession efforts. He is described by LA LAFCo as "bright, hard-working, and dedicated. He is remembered for his decades-long service to his local community, the San Fernando Valley, and the City of Los Angeles. The whole of Los Angeles County is a better place due, in many ways, to the work that [Commissioner Close] did for LAFCo, where his voice guided so many important decisions." CALAFCO's thoughts are with his family and LA LAFCo.



### CALAFCO Legislative Update

January 3, 2022 marked the start of the second year in the 2-year legislative cycle. Once again the year is expected to be wild and unpredictable. The State has a large budget surplus which is creating all kinds of early budget negotiating, as is the influx of Federal money.

Legislators hit the ground running trying to move the large number of left-over 2-year bills through committee to meet deadlines. Looming deadlines left many of those leftover bills from 2021 on the cutting room floor and they are now designated as "dead". Now we will begin to see new bills for 2022 introduced.

For this legislative year the CALAFCO Board has identified several items as priority. First is the annual Omnibus bill which is authored by the Assembly Local Government Committee (ALGC) and sponsored by CALAFCO. Three proposals were approved by the Legislative Committee (Committee) and sent to the ALGC. Those proposals are now going through the broad stakeholder review process that occurs before the bill is introduced.

The second priority is to co-sponsor a legislative proposal with San Diego LAFCo to amend Gov. Code Sec. 56133 to explicitly state that exemptions pursuant to 56133(e) are to be approved by LAFCo. This is being done to curb agency self-exemptions which seem to be a growing problem across the state. For the past four months CALAFCO and San Diego LAFCo have been working on stakeholder outreach and attempting to secure an author. It is likely that CALAFCO will refocus these efforts to 2023. The Board will consider this at their April meeting.

The final priority as identified by the Board is to complete the work of the protest provisions rewrite working group. CALAFCO has been reporting to you for the past several years that we have been actively responding to several recommendations made in the 2017 Little Hoover Commission report (*Special Districts: Improving Oversight and Transparency*). Specifically, to address one of the recommendations, we initiated a working group of stakeholders in early 2019 to discuss the protest process for consolidations and dissolutions of special districts, specifically, the statutes related to LAFCo-initiated protest provisions and the 10% protest threshold while all other initiated actions have a 25% protest threshold.

The 18-member working group consists of seven CALAFCO representatives (including CALAFCO/CSDA Board member **Jo MacKenzie**, CALAFCO ED **Pamela Miller**, LAFCo legal counsel **Holly Whatley**, and EOs representing all 4 regions of CALAFCO including **José Henríquez** (Sacramento), **Steve**

**Lucas** (Butte), **Kai Luoma** (Ventura) and **Paul Novak** (LA); seven CSDA representatives (including one of their lobbyists, legal counsel and five members representing water, fire, resource conservation and community services districts), representatives from the League of CA Cities and from the CA State Association of Counties, as well as the consultants from the Assembly Local Government and Senate Governance & Finance Committees.

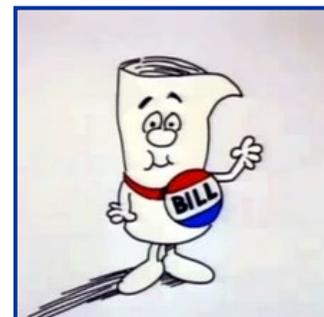
We are pleased to report that after three years of work and

extensive negotiations, the deliverables of the working group have been completed. The entire working group gave consensus on the redraft of existing scattered protest code sections within CKH into a single code section to simplify the reading of the code section. Further, agreement was reached on specific circumstances in which a LAFCo can initiate dissolution using the 25% protest threshold. The CALAFCO Board and Legislative Committee both unanimously approve and support this legislation and CSDA has also gone on record supporting the concept of the pending legislation.

CALAFCO issued a bulletin on the pending legislation and all deliverables for the working group on February 2, 2022. Senator Hertzberg will author

the legislation and our lead co-author is Assemblymember Mayes. For more information on this CALAFCO sponsored legislation (pending bill introduction), please refer to the February 2 bulletin.

All the Legislative Committee meeting documents are located on the CALAFCO website and are available for those with member access. You can also find the CALAFCO tracked legislation on the website. This report is updated daily.





### CALAFCO Associate Members' Corner



This section is dedicated to highlighting our Associate Members. The information below is provided to CALAFCO by the Associate member upon joining the Association. All Associate member information can be found in the CALAFCO Member Directory.

#### Berkson Associates



A Silver Associate member since 2015, **Berkson Associates** provides clear,

concise analysis for preparation of governance studies including district formation, consolidation and dissolutions, and has extensive experience completing incorporation studies. Expertise also includes market analysis, public agency budget forecasting and demographic/housing analysis in support of MSRs. Fiscal and financial analysis of water and wastewater systems, including Plans for Service for annexations and formations. For more information, contact **Richard Berkson** at [richard@berksonassociates.com](mailto:richard@berksonassociates.com). You can also visit their website at [www.berksonassociates.com](http://www.berksonassociates.com).

#### Rosenow Spevacek Group, Inc.



A long-time Associate member (both Gold and now Silver), **RSG** performs fiscal and reorganizational studies for LAFcos and applicants with the goal of establishing a factual, transparent and credible basis for their clients to make informed decisions. **RSG** prepared Placer LAFco's comprehensive fiscal analysis for the most recent incorporation proposal in California (Olympic Valley, 2017), preliminary feasibility studies for incorporation in Malaga (Fresno County, 2018), as well as several reorganization proposals and MSRs. To learn more about **RSG**, visit their website at [www.webrsg.com](http://www.webrsg.com) or contact **Jim Simon** at [jsimon@webrsg.com](mailto:jsimon@webrsg.com).

*CALAFCO wishes to thank all our Associate Members for your ongoing support and partnership. We look forward to continuing to highlight you in future Quarterly Reports.*

### Did You Know??



**CALAFCO Webinars & Courses Archived**  
Did you know that all **CALAFCO Webinar recordings** are archived on the CALAFCO website and available at no cost for on-demand viewing? Visit the CALAFCO website in the CALAFCO Webinars section (log in as a member first). **There are 52 CALAFCO U courses archived**

**and 16 webinars are archived and available for on-demand viewing!**

#### Meeting Documents Online

Did you know that all **CALAFCO Board of Directors and Legislative Committee meeting documents** are online? Visit the Boards & Committees pages in the Members Section of the site. Board documents cover 2008 to present and Legislative Committee documents span 2007 to present.

#### Career and Consulting Opportunities Posted Online

Did you know that **CALAFCO posts career opportunities for our member LAFcos and Associate Members on our website?** Did you know that **we also post consulting opportunities with our LAFcos for our Associate Members on the website?** Visit the Job Announcements page at <https://calafco.org/resources/job-announcements> for all the latest opportunities.



#### Mark Your Calendars For These Upcoming CALAFCO Events

- ❖ CALAFCO Leg meeting – 3/11 (virtual)
- ❖ CALAFCO Staff Workshop – 3/23 – 3/25 (Newport Beach)
- ❖ CALAFCO Board of Directors meeting – 4/22 (location TBD)
- ❖ CALAFCO Leg meeting – 4/29 (virtual)

The **CALAFCO 2022 Calendar of Events** can be found on the CALAFCO website.

