



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/7/2023

File #: 23-235

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Administration

Agenda Section: Departmental

SUBJECT:

Form an Ad Hoc Committee Regarding the Department of Health and Human Services' Relations with Big Lagoon Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria, Bear River Band of Rohnerville, Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Karuk Tribe, and Yurok Tribe

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee regarding the Department of Health and Human Services' relations with Big Lagoon Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria, Bear River Band of Rohnerville, Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Karuk Tribe, and Yurok Tribe;
2. Appoint two Supervisors to the Ad Hoc Committee regarding the Department of Health and Human Services' relations with Big Lagoon Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria, Bear River Band of Rohnerville, Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Karuk Tribe, and Yurok Tribe; and,
3. Direct staff to draft a letter for the Ad Hoc Committee members to send to the eight Tribal Councils in Humboldt County informing them of the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee as a venue for government-to-government communications.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

DISCUSSION:

The Department of Health and Human Services - Child Welfare Services (DHHS - Child Welfare Services) works extensively with local Tribes and their Tribal Social Services Departments in its work with Native American children and families. A fundamental premise of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 is that Native American Tribes, as sovereign nations, have sovereign rights and legal powers with respect to Native American children. DHHS - Child Welfare Services has been developing and implementing a program to ensure compliance with the intent and requirements of ICWA. The ICWA program is a result of extensive work DHHS - Child Welfare Services has done in past years to improve services and ensure that daily processes incorporate recognition of tribal sovereignty.

DHHS serves all Humboldt County residents, therefore DHHS - Public Health, DHHS - Social Services and DHHS - Behavioral Health provide services to Native American children, families and individuals, and sometimes provides these services on Tribal land. While DHHS - Child Welfare Services may have the most direct, pressing and visible relationships with Tribes and Native American children and families in Humboldt County, the need for culturally responsive and respectful services crosses through all branches and divisions within DHHS.

Therefore, as there is extensive interaction and collaboration between DHHS and the eight sovereign Tribal nations in Humboldt County, DHHS brings before the Board of Supervisors this request to form an Ad Hoc Committee comprised of two supervisors to address issues raised by Tribal governments in relation to the actions or performance of DHHS. The formation of this Ad Hoc Committee will allow for government-to government consultation when needed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are no direct costs associated with forming the requested Ad Hoc Committee. Supervisors who become members of the Ad Hoc Committee may have increased travel/mileage expenses if attending meetings with Tribal Council members.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework by building interjurisdictional and regional cooperation.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose not to form the requested Ad Hoc Committee. However, this alternative is not recommended as it would not provide an immediate venue for government-to-government consultation with local Tribal entities.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A