



Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY

JUNE 2019

Supervisor's Message: Response and Planning



Since my election last June and taking office in January, one truth of life has been highlighted... change happens! Change is inevitable and can be exciting, but it may also prove to be somewhat uncomfortable. Our very nature seeks a level of comfort and struggles to stay within that comfort zone.

When I made the decision to seek public office my life changed and when I assumed office it changed again. New colleagues, new co-workers, new friends, new responsibilities and new

activities were introduced into my life almost overnight. This, of course is not unique to my situation...it is part of the human condition we all experience.

The County itself is also constantly changing, morphing and growing. We see economic cycles, changing demographics, and experience cultural shifts, go through business transformations and philosophical changes - just to name a few. The question we need to ask ourselves is; "What is my response to these changes going to be?" The challenge for us is to come up with positive responses to these changes and translate those responses into solid future planning for the County.

Here in Tulare County, we have a wealth of knowledge and experience in our current staff and elected officials which we are always in the process of transferring to the next team.

This developing team will have fresh opportunity and will also be addressing various issues which may not have been on the radar in our history. How do we effectively plan for these issues, these challenges and these new opportunities?

Genesis 41 relates the story of Joseph being called on by the Pharaoh of Egypt to help him with a recurring nightmare dealing with their economy over the upcoming 14 years. Joseph, using the God-given interpretation, laid out a plan to respond to the forecast and convinced Pharaoh to implement it. Not only did the implementation of Joseph's plan save Egypt, it was so successful it became a blessing to the surrounding nations as well!

Although we may not have the 100% accurate forecast given to Joseph, we have some pretty good tools to predict trends in the County's future.

We can use this historic example in doing our best to gather data and make strategic plans to address the expected issues and opportunities while staying on the course that we determine. In doing so, we have an opportunity and the responsibility to benefit the people of Tulare County.

I am excited to be a part of this team selected by the people of the County to design and implement these plans. I pray that we will be a blessing and a benefit to all!

Dennis Townsend,
District Five
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

County Unveils New Clean Energy Project at Flip the Switch Event

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors along with energy partners, county staff, and community members gathered yesterday to celebrate the "Flip the Switch" occasion held on June 4 at the Government Plaza.

The County has partnered with ENGIE Services U.S. to implement a large-scale solar energy project at several County facilities, including

Government Plaza, County Civic Center, Bob Wiley Detention Facility, and the new South County Detention Facility. The energy saving program is expected to generate approximately \$40 million in savings over the next 25 years and reduce electricity spending by 70%.

"I knew Tulare County had many opportunities for electric generation and efficiency when



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Troy Barker Named as Employee of the Year

More than 120 nominees from 18 Tulare County departments were nominated to be named as the 2018 Employee of the Year. With great difficulty, the Board of Supervisors narrowed it down to one deserving candidate, Troy Barker.

Barker works for the Tulare County Resource Management Agency as a County Building/Zoning Inspector. It is with his exceptional work ethic as a Cannabis Compliance Officer that he has achieved an abatement rate in excess of 90%.

Barker's work statistics speak for themselves. He has documented 333 grow site locations resulting in 312 closed violations and 76 sites abated with violations fees.

"I am proud of all our County employees and the great work they do each and every

day," stated Board Chairman Kuyler Crocker.

"This year our Board has placed an emphasis on code enforcement and we appreciate Troy, the fruits of his labor, and his work in enforcing our local cannabis laws throughout the County."

In his role, Barker deals with very stressful situations leading several investigations. He handles each case professionally obtaining positive results. In just one year, his work has led to the eradication of over 86,630 illegal marijuana plants and recovered associated costs of \$78,372.00.

"Due to the political climate and passage of Proposition 64 we have seen a significant increase in violations to our local cannabis ordinance, Troy has been instrumental in handling these violations and resolving them," shared Mike Grove, Tulare County Code Compliance Supervisor who nominated Barker.

Barker began working for the County two years ago as an Extra Help employee to assist in the cannabis program. He has previously served in law enforcement which has proven helpful in his role at the County assisting the public in understanding the ever changing cannabis laws as well as upholding our local regulations aimed to eliminate illegal cannabis operations.

According to Grove, Barker's strong work ethic is contagious to other members of the County's Code and Building Department. He is regarded by his peers as a can do individual who gets results and often helps out other team members in their investigations.

In being named as the Employee of the Year, Barker will receive an extra week of paid vacation along with a year's worth of appreciation knowing he is truly one of the County's best assets.



2018 Tulare County Employee of the Year, Troy Barker

CLEAN ENERGY continued

I first joined the Board," stated Chairman Kuyler Crocker.

"ENGIE approached us with a proposal that would allow us to keep our reserves intact, but realize the cost savings. This large scale project will allow for future energy efficiency projects, maximize utility cost savings, and utilize precious taxpayer dollars for vital County Services."

Aligning with the County's Strategic Business Plan to promote fiscal and environmental responsibility, the new solar project is expected to eliminate carbon generated emissions equivalent

to taking 2,700 cars of the road every year in use.

ENGIE Services designed, engineered and installed a total 9.2 megawatts of solar photovoltaic (PV) power on solar shade parking structures and ground mount structures. In addition, the project includes 1 MW/2 MWh of battery energy storage systems to store electricity and maximize generation capacity.

"The ENGIE Services U.S. team has been proud to work with Tulare County over the past two years – helping deliver next generation energy

solutions to help address both the financial and environmental challenges that many counties across California are faced with," shared John Mahoney, CEO and President of ENGIE Services North America.

The new renewable energy equipment is financed through a power purchase agreement with ENGIE Services allowing the County to pay zero upfront capital and the ability to lock in a low fixed electricity rate for the next 25 years. The new large-scale solar project is expected to be fully operational at all seven County sites by the fall this year.

AROUND TULARE COUNTY

Around Tulare County is published once a month as a service to the public. Unless otherwise noted, articles are written by County staff. For additional information, contact Carrie Monteiro.

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