

Commission tables hiring of independent consultant



Written by Dee Holzel

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WINNEMUCCA — For the time being, the Humboldt County Commissioners have tabled the hiring of an independent consultant to review Jungo Land & Investment's solid waste disposal application.

The commissioners made the decision at their regular meeting on Tuesday (Jan. 18).

As Humboldt County DA Mike Macdonald explained, the commissioners intended to hire a private consultant in advance of public hearings scheduled by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) for May.

However, in gathering information it became clear they had some more homework to do. Before soliciting bids for the project, the commissioners must determine the scope of the work they expect from the consultant.

The commissioners voted unanimously to table the matter for the time being.

Commissioner Tom Fransway took the opportunity to speak out against the hearings being scheduled by NDEP. He said it was his understanding from John Taylor, of NDEP, the agency was not going to proceed with the solid waste disposal application until matters were settled with the federal lawsuit.

Commissioner Jim French said it was his understanding the application was going to be "put in a drawer."

Fransway wondered why NDEP was proceeding with the application of all of a sudden and expressed his concern the county won't have enough time to respond to the application with public hearings going forward in about four months.

It should be noted Fransway's information from NDEP was very different than that given to *SPJ* shortly after the federal lawsuit was filed.

Public Information Officer Vincent Guthreau said at the time the agency would continue working on the application and the project timetable remained on the NDEP website.

In essence, the CUP extension was a function of local government – not state government -- but NDEP would probably not sign off on the final project until matters were settled with the CUP.

Guthreau has been out of the office and not available for comment on the apparent misunderstanding.

Bob Conrad, acting public information officer in Guthreau's absence, said the agency could not comment on someone's interpretation of what may have transpired during a phone conversation or correspondence.

He said the NDEP has proceeded all along on processing Jungo's application and the only question before them was whether or not to issue Jungo's permit.

Jungo Land and Investments is in the application process necessary to build a class 1 landfill on private property 25 miles west of Winnemucca on Jungo Rd.

Although the Humboldt County Commissioners revoked Jungo's CUP extension, their actions in doing so are now the subject of a federal lawsuit, the CUP was stayed by the federal court.

