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Chillin' N Grillin' event helps create unity in community, organizers say

Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News

Posted: September 19, 2019



The Chillin' N Grillin' event in Fontana included lots of good food cooked by local first responders. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

The 4th Annual Chillin' N Grillin' community-police barbecue was held on Sept 14 in the Sports Pavilion at Fontana Park.

"The event is more than simply a barbecue. It is about furthering the trust and communication we as police officers have with the community," said Jason Delair, president of the Fontana Police Officers Association.

Chillin' N Grillin' is a partnership with the Concerned Citizens for the Development of North Fontana, a civil rights organization, and the Fontana POA, which represents all rank and file officers in the Fontana Police Department.

Other partners involved in the event included the City of Fontana, Fontana Chamber of Commerce, and many local businesses which were sponsors, including ABS Collision Center, Rotolo Chevrolet, Home Depot, Office Max, Costco and Dave and Busters.

The Fontana Boxing Club put on several demonstration bouts. Local resident Armando Muniz, an Olympic boxer turned pro who once held the title of welterweight champion of the North American Boxing Federation, was the celebrity guest.

Another celebrity guest was Mike Cano from the Ontario Improv. He entertained the attendees with his humor.

Other attractions included a car show featuring "Fiona the movie car" and an entertaining performance by the Los Angeles Parmellettes Drumline. Police and fire vehicles were also on display.

A special treat for children who attended was getting to pet Fontana Police K-9 "Goose," who was there with his handler, Officer Mark Wyrick.

Ellen Turner, the president of the Concerned Citizens, observed that it was an "excellent event which we enjoy doing each year because it helps bring UNITY in CommUNITY and demonstrates our gratitude for the sacrifices first responders make each day."

The first-place winner of the barbecue competition in the chicken category went to Fontana POA, with second place going to **San Bernardino Fire Fighters**.

First place for best ribs went to San Bernardino POA, with second place going to Fontana POA.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/chillin-n-grillin-event-helps-create-unity-in-community-organizers/article_885073a6-db05-11e9-ad9b-8f2322c99388.html

JUDGE RULES DAWN ROWE'S APPOINTMENT TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IS NULL AND VOID

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: September 20, 2019

Just days after Yucca Valley resident and Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe launched her campaign for election to the Board of Supervisors, a judge has ruled her appointment to the board in December is null and void. The judge's ruling is in response to a lawsuit filed by a public advocacy group, I.E. United, over the way the board selected Rowe. The plaintiffs contend that board violated the state's Brown Act when the supervisors voted December 4 to modify the selection process to replace James Ramos, who had been elected to the State Assembly in November. The group claims—and the judge agreed—that the four County Supervisors met “privately” and held a “secret ballot” when they emailed their top 10 choices for the seat to the board clerk, in their attempt to whittle down an initial list of 48 applicants to 13. The meeting's agenda noted that all applicants for the vacant seat would be interviewed. Only those applicants who were on the lists of at least two supervisors were interviewed. The judge agreed that this “secret ballot”—which had not been placed on a meeting agenda—constituted a violation of the Brown Act, and she ruled Rowe's appointment is invalid. The county has appealed the decision which puts the judge's decision on hold. If her ruling is upheld, the governor can appoint someone to fill the vacant seat.

<http://z1077fm.com/judge-rules-dawn-rowes-appointment-to-board-of-supervisors-is-null-and-void/>

Judge voids San Bernardino County Supervisor Dawn Rowe's appointment

Sandra Emerson, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: September 19, 2019, 9:45 am



The appointment of San Bernardino County Supervisor Dawn Rowe has been voided by a judge. The county has appealed the decision. (File photo by Will Lester, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

A judge has voided Dawn Rowe's appointment to the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, potentially giving the governor the chance to choose a new member.

In the ruling issued Wednesday, Sept. 18, Superior Court Judge Janet M. Frangie said the process used in November and December by supervisors to fill the 3rd District supervisorial seat violated the state's open-meeting law, the Ralph M. Brown Act. She also ordered the board to rescind Rowe's appointment.

The county has appealed the ruling and Rowe's role on the board has not changed, county spokesman David Wert said in a statement Thursday, Sept. 19.

The appointment was “legal, proper, and conducted with full transparency and multiple opportunities for full public participation, including public testimony, opportunities for all applicants to publicly address the Board of Supervisors, public interviews, and the inclusion of a seemingly endless amount of mail and email correspondence from residents,” Wert wrote.

The Board of Supervisors will discuss the matter in closed session at 1 p.m. Friday, Sept. 20.

Governor Gavin Newsom's office is monitoring the situation, spokesman Jesse Melgar, said in a Thursday email.

Michael Gomez Daly, executive director of I.E. United, the political advocacy group that sued over the appointment, applauded the judge's decision.

"This petition was never about the candidate selected to the seat, it was about protecting public transparency and accountability for our elected officials," Daly said in a news release. "Our democracy only works when we stay vigilant and make sure our elected officials serve their constituents."

In December, I.E. United argued that supervisors broke the Brown Act when they appointed Rowe, a former field rep for Rep. Paul Cook, R-Yucca Valley, to the seat Dec. 18.

Its suit alleged that supervisors illegally met privately and used a secret ballot to narrow a list of 48 applicants to 13 who would get public interviews. After the Dec. 11 interviews, supervisors picked five finalists, including Rowe.

The day of the appointment, I.E. United sent supervisors a letter calling on them to remedy the violation by interviewing all applicants. Supervisors, however, voted to rescind their previous actions narrowing the applicants. They then appointed Rowe.

The seat opened after former Supervisor James Ramos was elected to the 40th Assembly District. The county's charter requires the board to fill a vacancy within 30 days or the governor can appoint a new supervisor. It does not define the process for filling vacancy, an issue pointed out by supervisors, nor does it allow for a special election.

The county received 52 applications, from which 48 candidates qualified. To narrow the pool, supervisors asked them to answer 10 questions. All supervisors picked their top 10 applicants. Applicants selected by at least two supervisors would be interviewed.

The ruling states that supervisors violated the Brown Act by conducting a secret serial meeting when board members deliberated on the applications and submitted their list of 10 candidates.

"These lists were submitted by the board members through a series of individual emails, which were then collected and tallied by the clerk for the purpose of obtaining a collective agreement by the board members to interview only a limited number of the 48-person applicant pool," the ruling states.

The "meeting" and "action" did not occur at a properly noticed public meeting, nor did it meet any exceptions allowed by law, the ruling states.

Supervisors' top 10 lists were not publicized, but a sheet with tally marks next to applicants' names was made available to this publication upon request.

On Dec. 18, the supervisors voted to rescind the lists. They then selected their top two or three applicants, settling again on the original top five, plus Chris Carrillo, Ramos' deputy chief of staff and East Valley Water District board chairman.

Supervisors' actions that day did not cure the Brown Act violations, making their selection of Rowe null and void, the ruling states.

The first Brown Act violation allegation came from Needles resident Ruth Musser-Lopez, who said the narrowing process eliminated people of color, as most of the applicants who made it to the interview process were white. The seat is nonpartisan, but most of the 13 applicants were Republicans, she said. Ramos is a Democrat.

Rowe said this week that she will run for a full term in 2020.

Karen Ickes, a county human services employee and Yucaipa resident, applied for the position in November and plans to run for the seat in 2020. Ickes, a Democrat, said she is happy with the ruling.

"Transparency is very important to the public especially in San Bernardino County," she said.

Wert said the county is "perhaps the most open and transparent local government agency in California." For example, he said, it was the state's first to post online Board of Supervisors agendas and supporting materials including contracts. The county was among the first to require elected and appointed officials to post statements of economic interests online and was the first, and perhaps only, county to establish meeting video conferencing so residents in remote locations could address the board.

Supervisors' Friday closed session will be in the Magda Lawson Room on the fifth floor of the San Bernardino County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino.

APPOINTMENT TIMELINE

Nov. 6: Supervisor James Ramos is elected to the 40th Assembly District, with two years left on his Board of Supervisors term.

Nov. 13: Supervisors vote to take applications for the seat and set public interviews for Dec. 11.

Dec. 3: Ramos is sworn in to the Assembly. The county receives 52 applications for the seat, from which 48 qualify.

Dec. 4-8: Supervisors ask applicants to answer 10 questions and submit answers. Supervisors pick their top 10 candidates.

Dec. 10: Supervisors pick 13 applicants to interview.

Dec. 11: Supervisors interview applicants and pick five for a final interview Dec. 13. Needles resident Ruth Musser-Lopez sends a letter accusing supervisors of violating the state's open meeting law.

Dec. 13: Supervisors suspend the appointment process while county attorneys assess her allegation.

Dec. 18: I.E. United sends a letter alleging the process violated the Brown Act. Supervisors rescind the candidate lists and interview all applicants. Each chooses two or three of their top choices from the full list of 48, before voting to appoint Rowe.

Dec. 31: I.E. United files a petition with the San Bernardino County Superior Court asking a judge to overturn Rowe's appointment.

Sept. 18: Judge Janet Frangie rules that the appointment process violated the Brown Act, that supervisors failed to correct their violation and that Rowe's appointment is null and void. The county appeals.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2019/09/19/judge-voids-san-bernardino-county-supervisor-dawn-rowes-appointment/>

Judge rules the December appointment of Dawn Rowe null and void

Jené Estrada, Hi-Desert Star

Posted: September 19, 2019



Dawn Rowe attended the ribbon cutting ceremony of the new Pioneertown Pipeline on Aug. 13.

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY — Dawn Rowe's seat on the Board of Supervisors is in question after Judge Janet M. Frangie of the San Bernardino County Superior Court ruled on Wednesday that her appointment was unlawful and in violation of the Ralph M. Brown Act.

In the Nov. 6, 2018, general election, James Ramos, who was serving as the 3rd District supervisor for San Bernardino County, was elected to represent the 40th District of the California Assembly. As a result, a vacancy on the board was created and in a special meeting on Nov. 13 the four remaining board members approved a process to fill the vacancy.

Board members Robert Lovingood, Janice Rutherford, Curt Hagman and Josie Gonzales opened the seat to the public and received 52 applications in two weeks. Forty-eight of those applicants were found to be eligible and the board directed each supervisor to email the names of their top candidates, up to 10, to the clerk.

Candidates with two or more votes would be brought in for interviews.

Thirteen candidates were considered nominees and were invited to be interviewed in front of the board during a special meeting on Dec. 11. After the interviews, five candidates were chosen for further consideration and the board was scheduled to appoint a candidate during its regular board meeting on Dec. 18. Instead, they received letters alleging that the narrowing of the candidates from 48 to 13 was unlawful because it was done through email and not in open session. Two letters were sent by private citizen Ruth Musser-Lopez and one was sent by Michael Gomez Daly, the petitioner on the lawsuit against the board.

Lovingood moved to rescind all the prior actions taken by the board to fill the position and Hagman suggested that each supervisor recommend a couple of names from all original 48 candidates in the open session to be interviewed.

Lovingood did not agree with the allegations against the board's process and moved to appoint Rowe immediately, without doing any further interviews, but his motion was denied, getting only two votes.

Each board member was directed to submit three names and all of the candidates submitted were brought before the board for questions. Six people were selected — the five the board had selected in its previous meeting and Christopher Carrillo, a local favorite who many said was Ramos' pick for the position. Carrillo had been Ramos' deputy chief of staff.

Petitioners alleged that these interviews did not solve the problem and that none of the other 35 previously eliminated candidates were given the opportunity to go before the board for an interview.

"The Dec. 18, 2018, interviews were essentially a continuation of the unlawful process that began with the Dec. 10 secret ballot," stated the complaint against the board submitted by Daly, the executive director of Inland Empire United.

The board interviewed the six candidates and at the conclusion of the meeting, appointed Rowe to the seat.

The Yucca Valley resident has been serving on the board ever since as the 3rd District supervisor and she recently announced that she plans to run for re-election in 2020.

After her appointment, Inland Empire United quickly filled a lawsuit against the county that alleged that the process by which Rowe was selected violated the Brown Act because it involved a secret ballot and, in trying to correct, the problem the supervisors did not interview all candidates and showed favor toward candidates they selected in the earlier selection process.

"The supported corrective actions taken by the Board of Supervisors at the Dec. 18, 2018 meeting were pro forma at best and did not constitute a cure," read the complaint.

On Wednesday, Sept. 18, the judge ruled in favor of the petitioners and found that Rowe's appointment was unlawful. She declared that the board was in violation of the Brown Act and that Rowe's appointment was null and void.

On Thursday morning, the county of San Bernardino responded to the court's findings and submitted an appeal to the court of appeals.

"The county appealed this morning, so the decision is stayed," said public information officer David Wert in an email.

Wert later issued a press release that said that the appointment of Rowe was legal, proper, and conducted with full transparency and multiple opportunities for full public participation, including public testimony, opportunities for all applicants to publicly address the Board of Supervisors and public interviews.

The county considers Wednesday's action as the latest step in a lengthy legal process, Wert said. Hagman also added to the press release and said that Rowe has served the county well for the past nine months.

"Supervisor Rowe represents the Third District with integrity, intelligence, compassion and fairness," said Hagman in the press release. "We should not have to defend the appointment, but we will do so every step of the way."

If the appeals court decides to uphold Frangie's findings, then Rowe will be removed from office and a new 3rd District supervisor will be appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

http://www.hidesertstar.com/news/article_5ae3e370-db1f-11e9-9e15-af03bd3da85b.html

Judge Rules San Bernardino County Violated The Brown Act, Voids Dawn Rowe's Appointment

Benjamin Purper, KVCN News

Posted: September 19, 2019

Dawn Rowe may be out as San Bernardino County Third District Supervisor after a superior court judge ruled that her appointment violated the Brown Act.

A San Bernardino Superior Court judge ruled yesterday that the Board of Supervisors violated the Brown Act, which guarantees the public's right to attend and participate in meetings of local legislative bodies, when they chose Rowe for the Third District seat.

The judge's ruling concludes that Rowe's appointment is null and void and that a new appointment will be made by Governor Gavin Newsom.

Michael Gomez Daly is with IE United, the organization that filed the petition with the court. He says he hopes the governor's appointment will be a transparent process.

Daly: "It'll probably be one of our main goals of ensuring that it's an open, transparent process that gives justice to the residents of District Three."

County spokesman David Wert says the county has appealed the decision, staying the judge's ruling.

For now, Rowe remains a supervisor.

Rowe announced earlier this week that she will run for a full term as the Third District Supervisor in 2020 – her office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

<https://www.kvcnnews.org/post/judge-rules-san-bernardino-county-violated-brown-act-voids-dawn-rowe-s-appointment>