

Calaveras County OKs streamlining efforts

By Dana M. Nichols
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SAN ANDREAS - Calaveras County supervisors have approved changes that will slightly shrink the management pyramid in two county departments.

The position of Chief Assistant Administrative Officer Clay Hawkins will be eliminated after he retires Monday. He will be replaced by a lower-paid senior administrative analyst.

Human Resources and Risk Management Director Francine Osborn reported that change will yield annual savings of about \$126,460.

Also, the public health director position - currently vacant - will be reclassified as a public health manager. That will allow a shift to more front-line management responsibilities and to seek candidates with a bachelor's degree in a relevant field, rather than the master's degree previously required.

The change in the health director position is part of the process of a merger that began last year of the CalWorks (welfare), Health and Behavioral Health departments. Ultimately, the new Health and Human Services Agency will have one director, one deputy director and four managers.

As dire financial circumstances continue to shrink the county's work force, some departments are adapting by merging, consolidating management positions and cross training front-line employees to allow more flexibility in who does what work.

Two employees in the Administrative Office, for example, are being reclassified from specialized positions to more general job titles. Supervising board clerk Diane Severud and an account technician will be reclassified as administrative assistants and trained to do each other's work.

County Administrative Officer Lori Norton said that with upcoming retirements, including that of Assistant County Administrative Officer Shirley Ryan in December 2015, it is important to begin recruiting and training possible successors.

"We have an aging work force," Norton said, prompting laughter among the audience in the Board of Supervisors chambers Tuesday.

Norton noted that with the large budget shortfall anticipated in the upcoming fiscal year, which begins July 1, she anticipates other county departments will also need to reduce their administrative ranks and cross-train more county employees to be generalists able to handle several jobs.

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