

Oliveira: County survives thanks to tremendous employees

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Calaveras County “always survives” despite the Butte Fire in 2015, the storms in 2017, the statewide bark beetle infestation and the influx of cannabis, District 3 Supervisor Michael Oliveira said at Friday’s second annual State of the County Breakfast.

He attributed the county’s ability to survive these obstacles to the “tremendous resiliency” of county employees who in some cases have been doing two or three jobs.

“They are a tremendous asset,” he told the audience of approximately 150 gathered in the San Andreas Town Hall.

The county has been busy with post-Butte Fire recovery, such as removing damaged trees from road rights-of-way and replacing the Rail Road Flat bridge, he said in his keynote address, and a lot is happening behind the scenes when it comes to improving county services.

Those improvements include:

The county library is now linked with access to nearly 9 million books in colleges and other libraries.

Health and Human Resources has expanded programs to assist the county’s mentally ill.

The Sheriff’s Office is able to fill critical positions that previously had been vacant.

The probation department has reduced the incarceration and placement of juvenile offenders.

New equipment has been installed in Sheriff’s Office vehicles to improve communications in remote areas of the county.

The District Attorney’s Office received a grant to support victim services programs and that was capped off with a first-ever ceremony earlier this year to honor victims of homicides.

Improvements to the cannabis abatement program drastically reducing the enforcement timeline.

Getting the Federal Emergency Management Agency to revise incorrect flood maps for the county.

Investing in software updates to improve efficiency in several departments.

Refinancing bonds and certificates of participation to reduce interest payments.

Made the county website “computer-friendly.”

Health and Human Services maintained a 99 percent case management accuracy rating. (The state average is 94 percent.)

Goals for 2017-18 include:

Using a \$90,000 grant to provide hi-speed, broadband internet to county library branches.

Opening a new Angels Camp library with double the size of the old one.

Improving the building department’s permitting system to make it easier to do business.

Completing the General Plan update.

Addressing deferred maintenance and upgrades at the Government Center.

Implementing a “strategic operations plan” to guide county government.

Focus on building partnerships with the county’s nonprofits.

Oliveira applauded the efforts of the county’s first responders who are contending with an increase in emergency calls and service needs.

“We know what’s happening. We have increased crime, more calls for service and other factors that we’re dealing with,” he said.

When asked how he thinks the county stands economically, Oliveira said between 6 or 7 on a scale of 1-10.

“We have some work to do,” he added.