

Earlier grant funds may aid recovery

Record Bee
Zack Jordan
January 30, 2018

LAKE COUNTY >> The Golden State Finance Authority (GSFA) agreed to allow the county to use grant funds from the Valley Fire to assist with Sulphur Fire recovery efforts.

An amount of \$100,000 from the \$700,000 grant fund for the Valley Fire will be used to help provide housing down payment assistance, energy efficiency and other financial programs, with a maximum amount of \$2,500 for each survivor household.

Lake County Administrative Office Carol Huchingson said the board adopted this agreement in order to address housing assistance.

"Throughout our recovery efforts the North Coast has played a vital role and they are actually administering this grant for us," Huchingson said.

Because this is an agreement between the GSFA and the North Coast Opportunities (NCO) they will be able to claim up to five percent in administrative fees.

"We've been very fortunate that North Coast has been willing to administer this grant with practically no administrative fees available to cover their cost so of their total they can claim up to five percent," Huchingson said.

District 3 Supervisor and chair of the board Jim Steele said he thought this was roll over from the grants given to the county during the past fires.

Before working with GSFA to address Sulphur Fire recovery, however, the county needed to confirm terms of each grant. The funds were from two grants that were awarded to the county for fire recovery. The first one Huchingson said was for \$350,000.

"We thought a couple months ago that not all of the funds had been expended but it was clarified that they had expended those and this was a grant in full that was given at the \$700,000 level," Huchingson said. "We had thought some of the original grants might be made available in other areas where there had been fires, but because it was all spent on our local survivors that is not the case."

The county is required to provide reports on spending as the grant is used and, when doing so, has agreed to also show appreciation from the board for the approval of using the funds for the Sulphur Fire.

The issue may potentially be brought back to a later board meeting, Huchingson said.