



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

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Minh C. Tran  
County Executive Officer

## CONFIDENTIAL INTERNAL MEMORANDUM<sup>1</sup>

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| To: Board of Supervisors | From: Minh Tran, CEO                               |
| Date: May 3, 2021        | Re: My perspective on vaccine review/investigation |

“Honesty is the fastest way to prevent a mistake from turning into a failure.” James Altucher. This quote has been haunting me for the last several weeks and I wish things were different and better for our organization. Public trust in government is always important but in times of emergency, it is even more critical that the public has complete confidence in Napa County’s leadership and its actions.

The public display by one Board member of distrust and blaming others has been difficult, distracting and disruptive to the County’s daily operations and staff morale. The events of recent months have caused me much anguish for it is challenging to both work to move the organization forward while having to defend myself. The worst part here is that the blaming is completely misplaced for I did not cause this vaccine problem. I was not at the vaccine site and I did not request for the vaccine review/investigation<sup>2</sup>. I have been asking myself the genesis of this dark cloud over the County that is taking away all the great work County staff has worked so hard to accomplish since the beginning of this pandemic. I hope you too ask yourself this question.

Since Meyers Nave has informed us last week that they will send their final report today, I write this memo to share my perspective now that the investigation has been completed. I have kept silence when news reporters reached out to me to inquire about various allegations about the vaccination process. I have not publicly commented because the integrity of the County’s ongoing investigation needs to be protected. I also did not want to be seen as interfering with the independent investigation or tampering with witnesses since all of whom generally are admonished to keep their statements confidential and not to speak to each other.

Additionally, when County officials’ statements were made publicly about the vaccine process, the independent fact finder has to double back and re-interview witnesses to either confirm their statements or to get clarification of their understandings. This extra work undoubtedly adds more time and cost to the investigation, not to mention it may potentially compromise the entire investigation.

<sup>1</sup> For transparency, while I have marked this memo confidential, much of the contents herein are publicly available and I have found no actual basis for such a marking.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of this memo, “review” and “investigation” are used interchangeably and are synonymous in meaning.

At the March 4<sup>th</sup> public Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting, your Board directed me by unanimous votes to retain a third party to independently review the vaccine process. I worked with County Counsel Brax and HHSA Director Yasumoto to provide the scope of the investigation to Meyers Nave, whom was chosen because of their extensive experiences with complex municipal investigations and their existing contract with the County. Meyers Nave has served as the County's outside independent investigator for many years. Other than to check in on status and to provide them with requested documents, I retained Meyers Nave to be an independent fact finder and directed them to send us their final report without reviews or edits from me or any County staff.

Also at the March 4<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting, I answered directly and honestly about Kerry's quick phone calls to staff at the vaccine site regarding the January 20<sup>th</sup> incident. Last week, Kerry sent you a memo clarifying what he did and reaffirmed that he did not investigate the event.

In a meeting on the afternoon of April 20<sup>th</sup>, Supervisor Ramos informed me and Assistant CEO Becky Craig that she has reported me to the State Bar for allegedly withholding information from the Board. The State Bar regulates and governs attorney actions in their practice of law. As CEO, I serve the County as an administrator or manager and I am not practicing law.

Interestingly, around the time Supervisor Ramos spoke ill of me to the media and reported me to the State Bar, CSAC chose to spotlight me in their "Profile in Leadership" recognizing me for my two decade plus of work for local governments and thanking me my advocacy for California counties<sup>3</sup>. I feel Supervisor Ramos's actions have done permanent and irreparable harm to my reputation and career. These actions also cause harm to Napa County as an organization. It seems that her actions were mean spirited, vindictive in nature and intended to discredit the Board's directed investigation while retaliating against me for my limited role in this process. I wish these actions could be stopped and the situation remedied before exposing Napa County to even more legal and financial risks.

With vaccines being plentiful nowadays and the Covid19 crisis substantially ameliorated, it is my sincere hope that this dark cloud will soon pass us. We have to get the County's operations back to normal as there are many important issues needing your Board's attention and actions.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/CSACCounties/posts/minh-tran-has-been-working-for-california-counties-for-more-than-two-decades-fir/10159176415665818/>