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## Communications grant on agenda for supervisors

*Published: February 25, 2008*

By HOYT ELKINS

The Union Democrat

Inmate telephone services for the Calaveras County Jail, and a five-county effort to make broadband service available to remote areas, will be considered Tuesday by the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors.

Also, on Tuesday, the board will consider approving a new contract with the Service Employees International Union and adopting a number of resolutions making changes consistent with the new contract.

The inmate telephone issue before the board concerns dropping SBC Telephone Company in favor of a Delaware-based firm to provide telephone services for prisoners beginning March 1.

In addition to regular telephone services, inmate communications systems are required under the California Penal Code to contribute a portion of the fees for their services to the Inmate Welfare Fund. Evercom Systems, Inc. of Delaware offered to contribute 50 percent of the fees it collects, which is 4 percent more than the nearest competitive bidder was willing to pay.

The broadband telecommunications system under consideration for the benefit of remote areas of the county would be explored by the Amador-Tuolumne Community Action Agency in an effort to form a five-county region including Amador, Alpine, Calaveras, Tuolumne and Mariposa counties. The five counties then would pursue funding for various infrastructure, outreach and engagement projects funded by the California Emerging Technology Fund.

In its first year the project would identify ways in which it could connect existing public service "backbone networks" with community facilities, businesses and residences.

Ultimately, the plan is to lure larger telecommunications companies into expanding their services into what might otherwise be considered less desirable markets.

In other action, the board will consider:

- Raising fees collected by the Sheriff's office for its services in



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implementing Earnings With Holding Orders from \$25 to \$30, and for its services in handling summons and complaints from \$30 to \$35.

- What could be the last negotiating session for the purchase of 57 acres adjacent to the Government Center in San Andreas. The county wants the land for its new jail and justice center and for future expansion. If the county can't reach agreement with the land owners on a sale price, supervisors say they will build on land the county already owns. The board says it will make a decision on the matter by the end of this month.

public meeting

Calaveras County Board of Supervisors: 9 a.m. Tuesday, Calaveras County Government Center, 891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas.

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Tuolumne County has everything you need for a long stay or a weekend get-away, and it's all so close. From the gold rush towns of Jamestown, Sonora and Columbia, to the mountain communities of Twain Harte, Long Barn, Pinecrest, Dodge Ridge, Strawberry, to the Yosemite Gateway community of Groveland, the communities of Tuolumne County are diverse and uniquely rich in beauty and history.

Whether you travel to visit the area, or are a life-long resident, you'll find The Union Democrat Online to be the source of information on Yosemite, Sonora, Dodge Ridge, the Mother Lode, the Sierra Nevada, Columbia, Twain Harte, Jamestown, Groveland and all the other fine communities of this area.

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