

Citizens For Healing Rebuttal of opposition by "Save The Name of Kelseyville"

This is a rebuttal by Citizens for Healing, of the opposition to the change, as described in the entry for the US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) January 2024 Quarterly Review List.

Some of these responses are already covered in our submission, and in the BGN's summary of our proposal.

A group named Save the Name of Kelseyville ("Save the Name, Tell the Story")

At the time our proposal was added to the Quarterly List we could not find any information about this group. A search on Google and on Facebook yielded no clues as to who they were.

On February 15th, 2024 they submitted an article to a local online newspaper, which is substantially the same as the summary in the case file, and which identified themselves and their private facebook page. The paper took down the article after a day or two.

is adamantly opposed to the name change.

The chairman of the group notes:

[In this] farming community there are still many descendants of pioneer families. To this day, we are a diverse rural, agricultural community.

Many descendants of the Pomo of that period live here too. Their children go to local schools. Pioneers and Pomo have lived side by side for a century and a half.

Andrew Kelsey and his associate, Charles Stone, were horrific, abusive men to the local Native Americans of our area. Andrew and his associate were murdered by the local Native Americans in 1849. No one from our community condones the abuse of those men.

The people of our community know this painful story and acknowledge it. It is part of our history.

In our round-the-lake meetings we have encountered many people who did not know the history.

[However] I have come to the conclusion that it was named Kelseyville, not to honor Kelsey, but because he was the first person to build a cabin in an unnamed area, a process which was happening in towns across our nation.

Salvador Vallejo was the first (European) person to build a permanent cabin, at his LupYomi Rancho. The second was probably one of his majordomos, who established his own Rancho in Big Valley. Vallejo sold LupYomi to the Kelseys.

Other Lake County towns were initially named after a pioneer:

Forbes Town became Lakeport
Grantville became Lower Lake
Stubbs became Clearlake Oaks

Changing the name of this town would create great financial [pain]

We are researching the financial and organizational costs.

No business is required to change its name.

If they do change, they can continue their company registrations as "Kelseyville Something Inc", and just file a Fictitious Business Name of "Konocti Something". No contracts of any kind need to be changed.

Mail addressed to the old name will still be delivered.^{Note 1}

We are investigating what government filings will be required, and will petition our representatives for a waiver of fees.

The most expensive single items are probably signage on buildings and vehicles. There are only about 6 state-maintained signs on Highway 29, and even fewer county signs. Aside from the school district^{Note 2} there are only a handful of large, expensive signs. (Incidentally the Kelseyville Business Association has just installed a sign on Route 29, and is currently raising funds for a large archway, knowing that the name might be changed.)

There is no need to repaint vehicles bearing the Kelseyville name. Perhaps one could apply a sticker "Now Konocti". And on new vehicles, for a few years, a small "Previously Kelseyville" would not be offensive.

Many businesses in Kelseyville already use "Konocti" in their name.

and emotional pain to this small, rural agricultural/tourism community.

A local minister, Clovice Lewis, has specifically addressed the emotional pain to ALL parties in his talk "What's In a Name". The emotional pain to Pomo of keeping the name was the subject of our meeting in Upper Lake. Some opponents of the change were there.

None of the members of Citizens for Healing own businesses in this town. . . .

We are intentionally NOT organized, so we have no "members" and no "officers". One of our supporters manages a non-profit organization in Kelseyville which is a member of the Kelseyville Business Association.

To date,^{Note 3} this group has still not reached out, personally, to anyone in our community

We have reached out to the entire community, through Press and Radio announcements. Many of our meetings are held in Kelseyville: initially in Pioneer Park, others in a private house. Our kick-off meeting was in nearby Big Valley Hall (we were unable to find a suitable venue in Kelseyville itself). We have intentionally NOT campaigned at events such as the Pear Festival and Street Dances.

Opponents of the change have attended our meetings.

Several people who signed our petition self-identified as Kelseyville residents.

Many of us personally know people who live or work in the community.

or to any county officials for support. . . .

Some of us have, individually, reached out to our own Supervisors, and as a group we notified the Board that our proposal was accepted.^{Note 4}

The Lake County Board of Supervisors established a "Visioning Forum" to solicit ideas on how the County can be more inclusive to minority groups. At least one supporter of Citizens For Healing, and sometimes several, have attended their planning and their three public meetings. Two Supervisors are on the forum, and others have attended the public meetings. The issue of "historic names", and Kelseyville in particular were identified as a major problem in the community. The forum's first report to the BOS is due imminently. To the best of my knowledge no opponent of the name change attended any of these meetings: none spoke up.

There is no support for this group from the merchants of our Main Street.

The Press Democrat (March 4, 2022) interviewed businesses owners who supported and who opposed the change. We recently visited businesses in Main Street Kelseyville, and found a mix of supporters, opponents and neutrals.

From the minutes of our October 2020 Meeting in Pioneer Park:

A businesswoman attending said the process would take a long time, and that she would support the change, be willing to incur all the expenses, because she felt it was important to change the name of the town.

We understand that around June 2022, the Kelseyville Business Association held an informal survey of its members; that many members did not respond; and that although the majority who responded were against, the result was "close".

/s/ Alan Fletcher 2/20/2024

Reviewed by the proponent.

Note 1 : The name of the post office does not automatically change if the town name changes.

Note 2 : School districts set their own names, so this is not strictly a BGN matter. Ironically, every school bus is emblazoned with the name of a child-rapist and child-murderer.

Note 3: The opposition's response is undated, so the time-frames "To date" and "still" may be "old news".

Note 4: At present (Feb, 2024) we are holding off on approaching the board of five supervisors, because one is running for re-election, and two are running for districts where the incumbent is not.