



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

August 26, 2025  
Board Meeting 25-23

## **SPECIAL MEETING**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

**Tuesday, August 26, 2025**

*The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with  
California Government Code section 54953.*

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

### **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

Vice President Gleason called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 5:04 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Margaret MacNiven, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Jed Cyr

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, and Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Stephanie Gross

Vice President Gleason announced that this meeting will be held in person only and that the public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website.

#### **1. Approval of Policy Statement Revisions to the Basic Policy to Specifically Incorporate the Coastside Protection Area (R-25-111)**

Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan presented.

Director Gleason stated that there are parts of the mission that apply across the District, such as the rural character and agricultural aspects, and that more support across the District could be

created for the agricultural aspect if it is considered holistically. He suggested it could be a future discussion.

Ms. Chan explained that while viable agriculture was specifically identified for the coastside, protecting the rural character was included as a general definition for open space.

Director Holman suggested modifying the first definition of open space to state that it “is land area that retains conservation values and may include natural, restored, undeveloped, and working agricultural land.” She explained the modification will clarify that while open space may include natural, restored, undeveloped, and working agricultural land, it does not necessarily need all four elements to be defined as open space.

Ms. Chan stated that the proposed change could be incorporated at the discretion of the Board of Directors (Board).

Public comment opened at 5:46 p.m.

Vince Fontana expressed frustration with his interactions with the District. He stated there are further discussions he would like to have with the District either in a public or private forum.

Lucy White advocated for protecting agriculture on the coastside, keeping agricultural and open space lands separate, and increased freedom for farmers and ranchers.

BJ Burns, President of the Farm Bureau, echoed Lucy White’s comments, emphasizing that grazing tenants need the freedom to improve the land to maintain a viable business.

Public comment closed at 5:56 p.m.

General Manager Ana Ruiz stated that the District as a public agency is held to very high standards for managing lands. The District follows specific protocols because any harm to protected species or habitats could result in significant repercussions to the District from regulatory agencies.

Public comment reopened 6:02 p.m.

Nancy Fontana expressed concern about staff’s communication regarding mowing, the difficulties of securing insurance on agricultural lands, which are open to the public, and eminent domain.

Public comment closed at 6:05 p.m.

Ms. Chan emphasized that the Basic Policy states that the District is prohibited from using eminent domain in the Coastside Protection Area.

Director Kersteen-Tucker further explained that in response to feedback from the Farm Bureau, the District obtained legislation from the state to prohibit the District from using eminent domain in the Coastside Service Area.

Director MacNiven stated that the District has a meeting scheduled with the Farm Bureau to address concerns and reach a mutual understanding.

Director Holman requested that the first bullet point for the definition of open space in Attachment 1, page 1 add the words “and may” to state that open space, “Is land area that retains conservation values and may include natural, restored, undeveloped, and working agricultural land.” She further requested a similar change be made to the coastsides mission statement, also in Attachment 1, page 1, to reflect that the mission is, “To acquire and preserve in perpetuity open space land which may include agricultural land of regional significance, protect and restore the natural environment, preserve rural character, encourage viable agricultural use of land resources, and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.” She clarified that the changes would remove the impression that open space and agricultural lands are not the same.

Ms. Chan stated that modifying the coastsides mission statement was outside the scope of the Committee’s charge and was not on the meeting agenda for Board consideration. She explained that when the District created a coastsides mission statement, it specifically added the agricultural land language to demonstrate the District’s commitment to the coastsides to protect agricultural land. She further explained that the changes to the Basic Policy were made to bring the document into alignment with the Coastal Service Plan. Any changes made to the coastsides mission statement would require updating the Coastal Service Plan, which would be an entirely separate process since the Coastal Service Plan was approved by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo).

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested that no changes be made to the mission statement but that the first bullet point beneath the definition of open space could be updated to reflect Director Holman’s changes.

**Motion:** Director Riffle moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to approve the proposed policy statement revisions to incorporate the Coastsides Protection Area into the Basic Policy in a manner consistent with the Coastal Service Plan and to revise the definition of open space as listed on page one of the Basic Policy to have the first bullet point read that open space, “Is land area that retains conservation values and may include natural, restored, undeveloped, and working agricultural land.”

**ROLL CALL VOTE:           6-0-0 (Director Cyr absent)**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice President Gleason adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 6:23 p.m.

Shaylynn Nelson  
Deputy District Clerk