



SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING

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

Wednesday, August 27, 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 – CLOSED SESSION**

Vice President Gleason called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 5:01 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 Counsel Hilary Stevenson and District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public comment opened at 5:01 p.m.

District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria reported no public comments were submitted for the closed session.

Public comment closed at 5:01 p.m.

The Board convened into closed session at 5:01 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Gleason adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 6:59 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTOR OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Vice President Gleason called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

President Cyr announced that he is participating in the meeting via teleconference using the AB 2449 “just cause” exemption due to illness. He disclosed that there is one adult present in his remote location with whom he has no existing relationship.

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight, Human Resources Supervisor Rebecca Wolfe, and Grants Program Manager Carol Schimke

Vice President Gleason announced 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.

REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

Vice President Gleason reported the Board met in closed session tonight and on August 20 and no reportable action was taken.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public comment opened at 7:05 p.m.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 7:05 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Holman moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY**Introduction of Staff**

- Jackie Van Der Hout, Water Resources Specialist

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDA

- Highway 35 Multi-use Trail Crossing and Parking Area - 65% Design

CONSENT CALENDAR

Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke on Agenda Item #5 and inquired whether Coastside non-profits are awarded grants at the same rate as the Bayside and asked how it is tracked.

Grants Program Manager Carol Schimke responded that she could not recall the exact distribution of grants for the Coastside. She added that the upcoming Request for Proposals will be released in September and will highlight that agriculturally based environmental education programs are of particular interest to the District. She also distributed a document that includes grantmaking data and analysis by location/county of applicant headquarters and by the locations of grant-funded services.

Public comment opened at 7:14 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 7:14 p.m.

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

1. **Approve the July 23, 2025 Board meeting minutes**
2. **Approve Claims Report**
3. **Authorization to apply for California Hazard Mitigation Grant Funding for the replacement and upsizing of the Bear Creek Redwoods Parking Lot Culvert Mitigation Project (R-25-112)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to sign the required local match commitment letter in the amount of \$381,250 to secure \$1,143,750 in grant funding from the California Office of Emergency Services Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the Bear Creek Redwoods Parking Lot Culvert Mitigation project and to negotiate and execute the grant agreement.

4. **Grant Application with the California Wildlife Conservation Board for the Highway 17 Wildlife Undercrossing Project (R-25-113)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution authorizing the General Manager to apply for up to \$13,000,000 in grant funding and negotiate a subsequent grant agreement, if awarded, from the California Wildlife Conservation Board for the Highway 17 Wildlife Undercrossing Project.

5. Updates to Board Policy 3.10-District Grantmaking Program (R-25-114)

General Manager's Recommendations:

Consider the following recommendations as supported by the Legislative, Funding & Public Affairs Committee:

1. Adopt three recommended updates to Board Policy 3.10, *District Grantmaking Program*:
 - a. Increase the Grantmaking Program award budget from \$250,000 to \$300,000, with an increased grant award size in each tier: Tier 1 from \$25,000 to \$30,000 and Tier 2 to \$50,000 to \$60,000;
 - b. Limit the grantee reimbursement period to a maximum of two years to align with the biennial (every two years) Grantmaking Program cycle and the corresponding release of a new Request for Proposals; and
 - c. Funding Priority descriptive updates.
2. Adopt an impact statement that *supports early-stage and grassroots initiatives* for inclusion in Board Policy 3.10, *District Grantmaking Program*.

BOARD BUSINESS

6. Amend the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Classification and Compensation Plan for Compensation Study adjustments based on the updated Compensation Philosophy (R-25-115)

General Manager Ana Ruiz provided opening remarks and Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak presented. Human Resources Supervisor Rebecca Wolfe and Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight assisted with answering questions.

Public comment opened at 8:08 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 8:08 p.m.

Director Riffle reflected on former Director Mary Davey's acknowledgement of staff as "the world's greatest staff" and noted that he increasingly appreciates the sentiment. He emphasized that attracting and retaining excellent staff requires competitive pay, benefits, strong culture, and effective leadership. He expressed support for the General Manager's recommendations.

Director MacNiven expressed appreciation for all staff, highlighting her work with the Planners and her utmost respect for their efforts. She acknowledged the extensive effort involved in the process and emphasized the importance of providing competitive pay. She expressed support for the General Manager's recommendations.

Director Kishimoto recognized both the broader significance and detailed work involved in the proposal, noting that the new salary ranges reflect the Board's appreciation of staff. She confirmed her support for the motion.

Director Holman expressed support for the recommendation and acknowledged the extensive research and work done by staff to bring the recommendation forward, as well as staff present. She noted that supporting staff involves not only compensation and benefits, but also strong management and resources needed to do their jobs. She emphasized the District's role as public servants and stewards of the land for those that live on the land. She affirmed her support for compensating staff in recognition of that stewardship and public service.

Director Kersteen-Tucker expressed support for the recommendation. She noted the significance of moving forward with the changes to staff compensation beginning September 1. She recognized the valuable contributions of the Planners and great points they have made and also appreciated the careful review by staff to ensure the District remains competitive and appropriately placed in the labor market. She affirmed her support and reiterated her appreciation for staff's unique work in keeping the District vibrant and ready to face the future.

President Cyr echoed his colleagues' comments and expressed appreciation for the thoroughness of the process leading to this point. He commended the thoughtful and carefully prepared letters received from staff. He voiced his support for the General Manager's recommendation.

Vice-President Gleason expressed support for the General Manager's recommendation, acknowledging that while some aspects of the proposal were difficult, the overall changes will strengthen recruitment and retention. He commended staff for forwarding their comments, noting that changes were made as a result of their comments, even if not every suggestion was followed, difficult decisions had to be made. He recognized the Planners in particular for their contributions to the quality of open space experience and emphasized the importance of keeping their concerns in mind for the future. He noted the upcoming classification studies and expressed hope that the information brought during this process will help the District build in the future and ensure the District is in the right place as it proceeds forward.

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and President Cyr seconded the motion to adopt a resolution amending the District's Classification and Compensation Plan for Compensation Study adjustments based on the updated Compensation Philosophy.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Director Kersteen-Tucker provided an update of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting held on August 26, 2025.

Director Riffle provided an update of the Hawthorns Historic Complex Ad Hoc Committee meeting held on August 14, 2025.

B. Staff Reports

General Manager Ana Ruiz reported a Ranger Badging ceremony was held on August 13. On August 28, she along with Directors MacNiven and Kersteen-Tucker, will be meeting with the Farm Bureau to discuss concerns, areas of interest, and opportunities to reimagine the partnership moving forward.

C. Director Reports

Director Kersteen-Tucker reported that she and Ms. Ruiz met with Supervisor Mueller on August 21. She reminded everyone that the trail naming ceremony for Lenny Roberts will be held on September 4 at Johnston Ranch.

Director Riffle reported that he attended the Heidelberg Material public information session hosted by Supervisor Abe-Koga. On August 4, he joined Assistant General Manager Brian Malone and Governmental Affairs Program Manager Josh Hugg to give Congressman Liccardo's Legislative Director a tour of Rancho San Antonio. He also participated in briefings with Senator Becker, Assemblyman Berman, and Senator Cortese. On August 7, he assisted staff with a tour of the Hawthorns Historic Area for Councilmember Mary Hufty and new Town Manager Darcy Smith.

Director Holman reported that she and Director MacNiven presented at the Menlo Park City Council.

Director Kishimoto reported that she too attended the Heidelberg Material public information session hosted by Supervisor Abe-Koga, and on August 21, she attended a Bay Conservation and Development Commission meeting.

Director MacNiven attended the Ranger Badging ceremony, the Menlo Park City Council presentation, tabled at the Pescadero Art festival on August 16, and a sustainable grazing presentation at TomKat Ranch on August 25.

President Cyr expressed regret for missing recent meetings as he is recovering and expects to resume full participation soon and thanked everyone for their patience.

Vice President Gleason reported he also attended the Ranger Badging ceremony. On August 20, as part of a Spotlight Stewardship event, he visited Rocks Ranch and the Bolsa Fish Passage project. On August 23, he joined a trail project at the Redwood Trail at Purisima Creek, where volunteers made significant progress on improving accessibility. He rode the Waterhill Creek trail at Monte Bello Open Space Preserve and observed the site of a recent fire, acknowledging staff efforts in identifying and containing it.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Gleason adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC, District Clerk