



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

November 12, 2025  
Board Meeting 25-30

## **REGULAR MEETING**

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

**Wednesday, November 12, 2025**

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

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

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

President Cyr called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

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

Director Kersteen-Tucker announced that she is participating in the meeting via teleconference using the AB 2449 “just cause” exemption due to physical disability. She disclosed that her husband is also present in her remote location.

Members Absent: Yoriko Kishimoto

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, Senior Capital Project Manager Paul Kvam, Fleet & Facilities Manager Brandon Stewart, Public Affairs Specialist III Natalie Jolly, Management Analyst II Eduardo Gonzalez, Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight, and Human Resources Supervisor Rebecca Wolfe

President Cyr 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.

## **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Public comment opened at 7:02 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 7:02 p.m.

## **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

President Cyr reported that General Manager Ana Ruiz requested to hear Agenda Item #14 after Agenda Item #9.

**Motion:** Director Riffle moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to adopt the modified agenda, with Agenda Item #14 being heard immediately after Agenda Item #9.

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

Director Kishimoto joined the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

## **SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **Introduction of Staff**

- Ben Talavera, Management Analyst II
- Abraham Lopez, Farm Maintenance Worker
- Scott Reeves, Engineering and Construction Manager

## **INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDA**

- Madonna Creek Equestrian Bridge Removal

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Director Riffle requested clarification on Agenda Item #3, noting the listed expenditure of \$48,621 for the Beatty House Removal but the house has not been removed.

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone confirmed that the Beatty House was not removed. He stated staff will review the expenditure and provide an explanation to the Board of Directors (Board).

Director Riffle spoke on Agenda Item # 6, noting that the barn has three potential users: the grazers, the District, and visitors. He requested that when the item returns to the Board, staff include information on the potential uses of the barn.

Director Holman inquired if staff would correct Agenda Item #3 to avoid any misunderstanding regarding the Beatty House.

Ms. Ruiz stated that staff will clarify the item for the Board. She explained that the budget numbers and project names are often established well in advance, and she will consult with the

Chief Financial Officer to determine whether a revision is necessary. She added that otherwise staff can include an asterisk or a clarification that the decision was to retain the structure.

Public comment opened at 7:29 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 7:29 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Riffle moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0**

- 1. Approve the October 22, 2025 Board meeting minutes**
- 2. Approve Claims Report**
- 3. Approve the Purchase of the Santa Clara County Tax-Defaulted Valoff-Pezzoli Property located in unincorporated Santa Clara County as an addition to Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (Assessor's Parcel Number 558-31-008) (R-25-140)**

General Manager's Recommendations:

1. Determine that the recommended actions are categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
2. Adopt a resolution approving an Agreement with Santa Clara County to Purchase the Tax-Defaulted property and authorizing the General Manager or other appropriate officer to execute any and all documents necessary or appropriate to purchase the tax-defaulted property and amending the FY2025-26 Budget to increase the Measure AA Fund Capital budget in the amount of \$386,091.
3. Adopt a Preliminary Use and Management Plan for the Property.
4. Withhold dedication of the Valoff-Pezzoli Property as public open space at this time.

**4. Award of Contract with Oregon State University for Consultation on Plant Pathogens (R-25-141)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to enter into a two-year term contract with Oregon State University to provide ecological consulting services regarding plant pathogens at 14 revegetation sites for a base amount not to exceed \$99,708.

**5. Second Reading and Adoption of an Ordinance Adopting the California Building Standards Code (R-25-142)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Waive the second reading and adopt an ordinance adopting the 2025 California Building Standards Code.

**6. Award of Contract for the Coastside Barn Evaluation Project (R-25-143)**

General Manager's Recommendations:

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with ZFA Structural Engineers to provide Phase 1 Feasibility Study services to evaluate disposition options for four barns and an accessory structure on the coastside for a not-to-exceed base contract amount of \$63,658.
2. Authorize up to \$135,379 for Phase 2 work for additional structural investigations and basis of design development services for selected structures that are deemed feasible for stabilization or rehabilitation for a not-to-exceed contract amount of \$199,037.
3. Authorize a 15% contingency of \$29,856 to cover unforeseen tasks beyond the current scope, for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$228,893.

**7. Contract Amendment with Irish Excavation for the Prospect Road Culvert Replacement Project at Fremont Older Open Space Preserve (R-25-144)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment in the amount of \$20,200 with Irish Excavation of Morgan Hill, California for installing additional riprap and erosion control measures, and off-hauling concrete and debris to complete the Prospect Road Culvert Replacement Project (Project), bringing the existing contract to a new not-to-exceed total amount of \$275,755.

**8. Reject All Bids for the La Honda Creek Agricultural Water Development Project in La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (R-25-145)**

General Manager's Recommendations:

1. Reject all bids received for the La Honda Creek Agricultural Water Development Project.
2. Authorize the General Manager to re-solicit bids.

**BOARD BUSINESS**

**9. Informational presentation on Board Policy 1.05 Board Correspondence (R-25-146)**

District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria presented. General Manager Ana Ruiz assisted with answering questions.

Director MacNiven expressed a preference for being offered the opportunity to respond independently.

Director Gleason echoed the preference to respond to inquiries independently with assistance from staff.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired whether the Board of Directors (Board) needs to agree on the response method or whether directors may independently make the decision.

Ms. Ruiz confirmed that each director has the opportunity to choose for themselves whether staff should universally reply on the director's behalf.

Director Kishimoto agreed that she would like the opportunity to respond independently.

Director Holman expressed concern that e-mails sent to the info@ inbox or the Board Contact portal would be read by staff. She stated the directors are responsible enough to solicit staff input if needed.

Ms. Soria explained that the current practice is established in Board Policy 1.05 and would require a revision in order for e-mails to bypass staff.

Director Gleason stated that he has no objection to e-mails sent through info@ or the Board contact portal being received by staff since there is no presumption of privacy. He explained that the prior practice of staff responding on the director's behalf was not ideal because the director was unaware of the original e-mail until staff included the director on the response to the sender.

Ms. Soria stated that future onboarding trainings of new directors will include a review of Board Policy 1.05 so new directors are aware of how the District manages Board correspondence.

Public comment opened at 8:04 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 8:04 p.m.

Ms. Ruiz stated that staff will return to the Board with an updated policy.

No Board action required.

#### **10. Approval of Salary Adjustments and Amended Classification and Compensation Plan for Board Appointee Controller (R-25-148)**

President Cyr called for a recess at 8:40 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 8:47 p.m. All Board members present.

The Board agreed to consider agenda items #10-12 jointly and take a single, consolidated vote on all three items.

Human Resources Manager Candice Basnigt and Board Appointee Evaluation Committee Chair Curt Riffle presented.

Public comment opened at 8:57 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 8:57 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Riffle moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded the motion for agenda items #10 – 12 to:

1. Adopt a resolution to adjust the Controller's base salary upward to \$80,641, plus a one-time merit pay bonus of \$4,032.
2. Adopt a resolution to adjust the General Counsel's base salary upward to \$321,077, plus a one-time merit pay bonus of \$9,632.
3. Adopt a resolution to adjust the General Manager's base salary upward to \$366,390 plus a one-time merit pay bonus of \$10,992.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0**

**11. Approval of Salary Adjustments and Classification and Compensation Plan for Board Appointee General Counsel (R-25-149)**

Agenda item #11 was heard jointly with agenda items #10 and #12.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0**

**12. Approval of Salary Adjustments and Amended Classification and Compensation Plan for Board Appointee General Manager (R-25-150)**

Agenda item #12 was heard jointly with agenda items #10 and #11.

**13. Governmental Money Purchase Plan and Trust (401(a)) and Retiree Health Savings, both set up as Employee-Only Contribution Plans, for Board Appointees (R-25-151)**

Human Resources Supervisor Rebecca Wolfe and Board Appointee Evaluation Committee Chair Curt Riffle presented.

Public comment opened at 9:02 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 9:02 p.m.

**Motion:** President Cyr moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to:

1. Adopt a Resolution implementing a new Money Purchase Plan (401(a)) and Trust for Board Appointees and authorize the CFO/Director of Administrative Services to execute all necessary and appropriate documents to establish and administer the Plan.
2. Adopt a Resolution implementing new Retiree Health Savings Plans for Board Appointees and authorize the CFO/Director of Administrative Services to execute all necessary and appropriate documents to establish and administer the Plan.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0**

**14. Award of Contract to Outfit the Open Space Explorer Outreach Vehicle (R-25-147)**

This agenda item was heard after agenda item #9.

Public Affairs Specialist III Natalie Jolly and Management Analyst II Eduardo Gonzalez presented. Fleet & Facilities Manager Brandon Stewart assisted with answering questions.

Director Holman inquired whether staff has contacted Los Altos police to gather data on vehicle break-ins.

Ms. Ruiz stated that staff can contact local police and use the response to guide the decision on where to park the vehicle.

Public comment opened at 8:39 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 8:39 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Kishimoto moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to authorize an award of contract to RV Grounded through Fremont Chevrolet to outfit the Open Space Explorer outreach vehicle for an amount not-to-exceed \$133,815.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0**

**INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

**A. Committee Reports**

Director Gleason provided an update on the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee meeting of November 4, 2025.

Director Riffle provided an update on the Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting of November 4, 2025.

**B. Staff Reports**

Ms. Ruiz reported that she attended an event hosted by Senator Becker on October 30 and attended the Farm Bureau Veteran's Day Dinner event held on November 7. She announced that the District has opened the La Honda Phase II trails.

**C. Director Reports**

Director MacNiven reported that she attended the Farm Bureau Veteran's Day Dinner.

Director Kishimoto reported that she hiked the new La Honda Phase II trails and is interested in knowing the demand on Allen Road. She also attended a Bay Area Older Adults event and the District's memorial event held for Jay Thorwaldson on October 24.

Director Holman attended the Jay Thorwaldson event. She also commended Gary Baum for his service and retirement.

Director Riffle reported that he attended the Jay Thordwaldson event, the Peninsula Open Space Trust Conservation Finance Fair held on November 4, and the Bay Area Older Adults event.

Director Kersteen-Tucker reported that she attended the Farm Bureau Veteran's Day Dinner and on November 10 met with Supervisor Canepa to provide an update on District activities.

Director Gleason reported that he attended the Jay Thordwaldson event, the Waterwheel Downhill Ride event, and tabled an event with Santa Clara County Horsemen's Association, Silicon Valley Mountain Bikers, and the Newt Patrol at Fremont Older Open Space Preserve. Also, on November 11 he biked the La Honda trails.

President Cyr attended the Jay Thorwaldson event.

**ADJOURNMENT**

President Cyr adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District meeting at 9:16 p.m.

Shaylynn Neslon  
Deputy District Clerk