



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

December 3, 2025
Board Meeting 25-31

SPECIAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Wednesday, December 3, 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

President Cyr called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Members Absent: Karen Holman

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, Real Property Manager Allen Ishibashi, Facilities & Fleet Manager Brandon Stewart, Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight, IST Manager Casey Hiatt, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Visitor Services Manager/Chief Ranger Matthew Anderson, Land Stewardship & Trails Manager Michael Gorman, Budget & Finance Manager Rafaela Oceguera, Engineering & Construction Manager Scott Reeves, Controller Mike Foster, Grants Program Manager Carol Schimke, Governmental Affairs Program Manager Joshua Hugg, Procurement Program Manager Sarah Araya, Budget & Analysis Supervisor Elissa Martinez, Management Analyst I Jordan McDaniel, Finance Supervisor Miranda Shum, and Management Analyst I Samantha Powell

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.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

President Cyr reported that the General Manager requested to move agenda item #4 after agenda item #1.

Motion: Director Gleason moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to adopt the modified agenda, with agenda item #4 being heard immediately following agenda item #1.

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

BOARD BUSINESS

Director Holman arrived at 9:05 a.m.

1. Environmental Scan and Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives for Fiscal Year 2026-27 (R-25-152)

Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak and Assistant General Manager Brian Malone presented. General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Grants Program Manager Carol Schimke, and Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight assisted in answering questions.

Director Riffle suggested that the Board revisit the mission priorities each year.

Director Holman noted that parking lots in San Mateo County require striping and other urban aspects that are inconsistent with the natural environment and setting. She requested that General Counsel keep the Board of Directors (Board) apprised of progress made towards becoming an agency that can self-permit for local permits since that may affect the outcome of the District's parking lots.

Director Kersteen-Tucker advocated for meaningful and regular interactions among staff. She clarified that she is not requesting staff to return to the office full-time and that she trusts the General Manager's sensitivity to staff interests. She requested an update as the year progresses.

Director Holman remarked that the key challenges listed for *Board Direction* on slide 9 were written negatively. She stated she would rather see the slide reflect that receiving new information and suggestions from directors often prompts new ideas.

Director Riffle agreed that staff should be open to new ideas but emphasized the importance of considering how ideas are implemented and integrated into a larger discussion. He noted that at times there appears to be an urgency to make decisions when it is okay to pause and consider how to move forward.

Director Kishimoto stated she also thought the key challenges were written negatively and expressed concern that it may be interpreted that Board members and the public should not share their ideas.

Ms. Ruiz explained that the intention was not to discourage ideas but rather to emphasize that ideas should be vetted by the full Board to determine whether the District should proceed. She explained that when a Board member raises an idea to a staff member it is often interpreted as a directive. She emphasized that the District has 19 years remaining to complete Measure AA (MAA) projects and there is a need to stay focused on core priorities.

Director Kersteen-Tucker explained she did not interpret the *Board Direction* key challenges negatively and appreciated staff identifying that sometimes Board ideas can generate confusion and cause disruptions in schedules and resource diversion. She noted nothing precludes new ideas from coming forth and it is a matter of vetting the ideas to understand the trade-offs and implications.

Director Riffle suggested that the District consider cultivating partnerships with organizations that can assist the District with natural resource management and public access.

Ms. Ruiz stated that the District has created several partnerships in the last ten years, which bring in great capacity and knowledge, but one constraint is that for the partnerships to work, the District has needed to provide most of the funding. She explained that as other external funding sources continue to drop it will be difficult for partners to stay engaged unless the District can provide additional funds.

Director Riffle clarified that the District does not need to be the funding source for the partnerships but rather that there may be creative ways for the District to engage partners. He explained that the presentation did not identify volunteers as part of the partnerships but noted that they are a great resource that the District could engage more heavily.

Director Holman suggested that the District foster partnerships with the cities and towns, particularly with the parks departments, to hasten project results within those jurisdictions.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested that future key takeaway slides emphasize which tasks are new or have a renewed focus.

Director Riffle requested a discussion in how the District engages the public in projects.

Ms. Ruiz expressed concern that the District would be unable to complete the MAA projects by the deadline if the District continues to replicate the public engagement process from prior projects. She explained that public engagement is critical and it must be done in a way that accomplishes goals while being time efficient.

Director Gleason commented that each public access working group (PAWG) has been successful in its own way and the District has received great feedback. He suggested the District engage the public in a proactive, less staff-intensive manner.

Director Holman suggested consulting with the participants after each working group to learn what worked well and areas for improvement. Based on the feedback, staff can create a model

for an efficient working group. She suggested reaching out to known interested constituents early in the process and providing recognition to participants for their involvement.

Director Kishimoto suggested using AI to streamline processes where feasible.

Mr. Malone reviewed the draft FY27 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives.

The Board suggested edits to the FY27 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives.

President Cyr called for the Board to vote on whether to keep the DEI acronym in the Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives.

The Board voted 7-0 to keep the acronym within the Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives.

Public comment opened at 11:13 a.m.

Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 11:13 a.m.

President Cyr called for a recess at 11:14 a.m. and resumed the meeting at 11:20 a.m. All Board members present.

The Board discussed and refined the language FY27 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives.

Motion: Director Gleason moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to adopt the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives with the edits to guide the development of the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget and Capital Improvement and Action Plan.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

2. Progress update on Measure AA Commitments through the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025 (R-25-153)

Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan presented.

Public comment opened at 12:26 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 12:26 p.m.

No Board action required.

3. Measure AA 20-Year Implementation Roadmap (R-25-154)

Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan presented. General Manager Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, and Real Property Manager Allen Ishibashi assisted answering questions.

Director Kishimoto left the dais at 12:40 p.m.

Director Gleason requested that staff provide an update at a future meeting regarding the wetland challenges presented along the Purisima-to-the-Sea trail and the steps staff took to navigate the challenges.

Director Riffle expressed concern regarding the Alma Bridge road crossing project and requested that the District remain realistic about what can be accomplished to prevent frustration from the public later.

Public comment opened at 1:04 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 1:04 p.m.

No Board action required.

4. Implementation Status of the Financial and Operational Sustainability Model (FOSM) Refresh Recommendations (R-25-155)

Agenda item #4 was heard after agenda item #1.

Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak presented.

Public comment opened at 11:43 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 11:43 p.m.

No Board action required.

President Cyr called for a recess at 11:45 a.m. and resumed the meeting at 12:14 p.m. All Board members present.

5. Fiscal Year 2026 Big Rock Projects -- Progress Update (R-25-156)

Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan presented.

President Cyr requested that staff be mindful in future presentations that the background pictures do not obscure the slide text. He also noted that yellow is often difficult to see against a white background.

Public comment opened at 1:27 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 1:27 p.m.

No Board action required.

6. Oral Presentation - Partnership and Funding Contribution

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone and Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak presented. Controller Mike Foster assisted with answering questions.

Director Holman left the dais at 1:59 p.m. and returned at 2:03 p.m.

Director Gleason stated that the discussion regarding partnerships arose when the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) was considering the grantmaking program strategic review and recommendations. He explained this presentation is to discuss whether there is Board interest lifting restrictions on the grantmaking program for supporting projects outside District lands to provide opportunities for the public to connect with nature closer to their homes and schools. He clarified he is not requesting a policy change but rather facilitating a discussion.

Ms. Schimke advised the Board that in the latest round of grant applications, the District removed the requirement to have activities for access, interpretation and education occur on District land. The District now considers lesson plans that speak to open space benefits and land management even if there is not a planned activity on District land.

Director Holman concurred that the District could benefit from additional partners and stressed the importance of regional collaboration with partners, such as the Bird Alliance, to support migratory birds. She expressed interest in exploring the idea of partnership opportunities off District land.

President Cyr left the dais at 2:11 p.m. Vice-President Gleason chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Director Riffle concurred with Director Holman that the District should work with agency partners to protect birds. He explained his interpretation of the opportunity Director Gleason presented to the Board was whether to pursue partnerships to meet people in their communities outside of District land. He stated that it is beyond the scope of the District's charter and suggested the District's focus should be how the public can take advantage of the District's preserves. He expressed an interest in exploring the idea further if the District receives additional funds to pursue this work.

Director Kersteen-Tucker stated that the District currently has MAA commitments which should be the District's primary focus. She suggested that Director Gleason's idea may be better suited for a future bond measure and that the District does not have the bandwidth at this time.

Director Holman stated that the nexus between Director Gleason's question and the District's mission was to protect the natural environment. She explained that if the District does not begin a conversation with other interested entities, then the District would be protecting lands that are going to be segmented from other urban lands. She noted that while she is not suggesting the District begin a project, she does appreciate the topic being introduced to the Board.

Director MacNiven expressed concern about District funds and staff time that would be expended if the District were to pursue Director Gleason's suggestion.

Director Gleason summarized that the Board is sensitive to funding and MAA project commitments but that there is Board interest if the public signals an interest and provides funding. He suggested that staff could consider lifting restrictions further on future rounds of the grantmaking program.

Public comment opened at 2:19 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 2:19 p.m.

Ms. Ruiz stated that staff will consider the comments and seek ways to provide greater flexibility in the grantmaking program where feasible. She said staff will also pin the idea for a future funding measure, which the Board can explore further at that time.

No Board action required.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-President Gleason adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Shaylynn Nelson, Deputy District Clerk