



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

November 1, 2016
Board Meeting 16-27

SPECIAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Administrative Office
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022

November 1, 2016

DRAFT MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING –BOARD RETREAT

President Kishimoto called the special meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Nonette Hanko, Cecily Harris, Larry Hassett, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Pete Siemens

Staff Present: General Manager Steve Abbors, Assistant General Manager Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Manager Kevin Woodhouse, Chief Financial Officer/Administrative Services Director Stefan Jaskulak, Assistant General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Controller Mike Foster, and District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth

1. Board Retreat for the Purpose of Discussing the District's and Board's Role in the Bay Area and within the Organization, including Diversity Outreach and Initiatives, Public Outreach, and Environmental Stewardship.

President Kishimoto thanked staff and the members of the Retreat Ad Hoc Committee who helped prepare for the retreat and reviewed the day's agenda.

Director Hanko commented on the important role the District plays in the Bay Area and beyond to encourage similar organizations to be formed where needed. The District can continue to be a model for them.

Director Riffle spoke regarding the District's ability to partner with other organizations and being a resource for similar organizations but not an advocate for formation.

Director Harris spoke in favor of continuing to focus on implementing the District's mission statement within the District.

Director Hanko spoke in favor of partnering with cities within the District, especially related to trail connections.

Director Riffle left at 10:14 a.m.

President Kishimoto spoke regarding the impact of open space on making urban space more resilient.

Director Siemens arrived at 10:16 a.m.

Director Cyr spoke regarding the role of the District's open space helping support the ecosystem of the Bay Area.

General Manager Steve Abbors spoke regarding the District's role in environmental protection, which is the underlying *why* behind *what* is accomplished to fulfill the District's mission statement.

Director Siemens spoke in favor of the environmental protection role the District has taken on since its formation.

Director Harris spoke regarding forming connections with the public concerning to environmental protection using messages that are easily relatable.

Director Siemens agreed the District should focus on messages that resonate with the public to help people better understand the need for environmental protection, including clean lands and waterways, species restoration, etc.

Director Harris spoke in favor of the District doing scientific studies related to environmental protection whose results may be utilized by other organizations.

Director Kishimoto suggested the District could consider holding workshops or a lecture series regarding to areas where the District may lead.

Director Riffle returned at 10:42 a.m.

Mr. Abbors suggested the District could consider partnering with other organizations to sponsor a lecture series or similar event.

Director Harris and Riffle spoke in favor of highlighting the District's work related to wildlife corridors.

Controller Mike Foster spoke regarding current staff resources being fully committed and unable to take on new projects. The District may consider funding outside studies or other efforts that would not require District staff's time.

Director Hanko and Harris spoke in favor of and funds being spent within the District's boundaries.

District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth summarized the topics discussed by the Board for staff to start highlighting to the public, including integrated pest management, work with Native Americans, wildlife corridors, diversity, and educate and engage the public regarding the District's efforts, agricultural support, fisheries restoration, and proposed methods to highlight the topics, including sponsoring workshops and funding outside efforts.

The Board recessed at 11:26 a.m. and reconvened at 11:32 a.m. with all members present.

Director Cyr spoke regarding the role of the Board and how it may have changed in the last four years.

Director Riffle spoke in favor of the Board focusing on *what* the District accomplishes instead of the *how* things are accomplished.

Director Hanko spoke in favor of the District serving as a caretaker agency for the land it owns.

Director Harris spoke in favor of the Board serving as spokespeople for the District, understanding their legal and ethical responsibilities, and interacting directly with other elected officials and decision makers.

Director Riffle suggested members of the Board should consider reaching out beyond other elected officials, including to members of the business community, healthcare community, etc.

Mr. Abbors suggested the Board may consider creation of a vision statement for the District which could address the *why* behind the *what* the District does as defined by the mission statement.

Director Hassett expressed concern related to the Board not always staying "out of the weeds" of decision making.

President Kishimoto commented the details "in the weeds" are important because these details may lead to policy changes in the future.

Director Hassett commented on the work and analysis completed by the Board Committees and the tendency of the Board to sometimes reanalyze the project following Committee approval and recommendation.

Director Siemens spoke in favor of the Board setting policy and confirming the policy is being implemented properly through its Board appointees.

Director Riffle spoke in favor of the Board setting a vision for the District and stewarding the mission, connecting to the public, and Board members fully understanding the issues before them.

President Kishimoto suggested polling the public approximately every three years to gauge public interest, creation of a citizens' advisory committee, and Board members doing more training to become better experts on topics before the District.

Director Harris spoke in favor of more training for Board members and potentially raising the Board's training budget to allow Board members to attend more training opportunities.

Ms. Woodworth summarized the discussion regarding the role of the Board and how staff can help facilitate the role.

Director Riffle suggest the Board President may want to help shape the role of the Board each year after they are selected. The Board President may select areas of focus for the Board for the coming year.

Director Riffle and President Kishimoto spoke in favor of increased training related to issues before the Board and trainings to help improve as Board members.

President Kishimoto inquired regarding interest in drafting a vision statement for the Board and suggested Board members submit ideas related to a draft vision statement to the District Clerk by November 9th.

The meeting recessed at 12:35 p.m. and reconvened at 1:02 p.m. with all member present.

Mr. Abbors introduced the Public Affairs Strategic Plan currently being developed.

Director Riffle reviewed the Board goals and Public Affairs initiatives and objectives included in the strategic plan.

Director Siemens suggested the Public Affairs initiatives should support the *why* of the District.

President Kishimoto requested clarification related to the regional conservation vision.

Director Hanko left at 1:12 p.m.

Director Kishimoto suggested including connecting with new partners, such as the business and healthcare community, and Native American groups, as an additional objective for Initiative 2.

Director Kishimoto suggested increasing staff engagement with the public including providing opportunities for engagement. Additionally, the Board may have an increased role in connecting with people.

Director Cyr spoke in favor of the biweekly updates stating they help keep the Board members informed.

Director Riffle requested additional information related to communication among the District's various field and administrative offices.

Mr. Abbors commented on increased telecommunication capabilities that facilitate communication among the offices.

Director Harris requested additional information regarding the proposed visitor use survey.

Public Affairs Manager Shelly Lewis explained the polling would include preserve visitors and residents of the District and could be done at a regular frequency.

Assistant General Manager Ana Ruiz summarized the work of the Diversity Outreach ad hoc committee and the work completed by the committee to date. Ms. Ruiz requested feedback regarding the proposed diversity outreach values statement, goals, and objectives.

Director Cyr suggested reordering the values statement to state the District's values first.

Director Hassett spoke regarding a potential citizens' advisory committee stating if it is formed it should have a defined purpose and method of functioning and defined milestones to be reached.

ADJOURNMENT

President Kishimoto adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 2:16 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk