



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

February 10, 2021
Board Meeting 21-05

SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with California Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20. All Board members and staff participated via teleconference.

APPROVED MINUTES*

SPECIAL MEETING

President Riffle called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle, and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: Larry Hassett

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Resource Management Specialist II Matt Sharp Chaney, Resource Management Specialist II Lewis Reed

President Riffle announced this meeting is being held in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Order allowing Board members to participate remotely. The District has done its best to conduct a meeting where everyone has an opportunity to listen to the meeting and to provide comment. 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. President Riffle described the process and protocols for the meeting.

Director Hassett joined the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

1. Amendments to the Grazing Management Policy Pertaining Specifically to Reimbursements for Cattle Predation and Research on Safe Livestock and Wildlife Protection Measures (R-21-22)

*Approved by the Board of Directors on February 24, 2021

General Manager Ana Ruiz provided introductory comments describing the development of the proposed policy amendments, including public outreach and meetings, consulting agricultural and conservation partners, etc. Ms. Ruiz reviewed the various purposes of conservation grazing, including grassland management, wildfire prevention through fuel reduction, and support of grassland biodiversity.

Resource Management Specialist II Lewis Reed described the purpose of the District's conservation grazing program and its ability to help meet the requirements of the Coastal Service Plan. Mr. Reed described the ability of conservation grazing to support native grasslands and grassland habitat biodiversity. Mr. Reed described the importance of monitoring sites to understand the health of the ecosystem to support and improve the program

Veronica Yovovich a wildlife conflict specialist described the results of District tenant surveys, including tenant concerns regarding predation, animals lost to predation, and the difficulty in confirming predation losses. Ms. Yovovich reviewed local agency predation policies and the effectiveness of tools aimed at reducing the threat of predation, such as hunting, night penning, livestock guarding animals, and fencing. Finally, Ms. Yovovich described components for a successful grazing program, such as varying the tools and tailoring them to the livestock operation.

Human-Wildlife Conflict Advisor Carolyn Whitesell described her research seeking to understand the behavior and interactions between wildlife and livestock on District and nearby private lands in San Mateo County.

Resource Management Specialist II Matt Sharp Chaney summarized the various workshops, public meetings, and partner consultations used to develop the proposed grazing policy amendments and the outcomes of these discussions. Mr. Sharp Chaney outlined the District's current reimbursement practice for compensating conservation grazing tenants for confirmed livestock losses to predators and described the various wildlife and livestock protection measures allowed by the District. Mr. Sharp Chaney detailed the proposed amendments to the grazing policy.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired if ranchers could be incentivized to participate in the research, implement various deterrence tools, and remove attractants.

Mr. Sharp Chaney stated staff is working closely with grazing tenants on the research and reported the research budget does include some funds for installing deterrence tools, which would be selected in consultation with the grazing tenant. Additionally, using deterrence tools and removing attractants should reduce predation of livestock, which is an incentive for grazing tenants.

President Riffle inquired regarding the ability to track the changes to mountain lion populations and proposed success criteria related to the conservation grazing program.

Mr. Sharp Chaney described several research efforts to understand the size of the state's mountain lion populations and any population trends. Staff will continue deterrence tool research and seek to better understand when livestock losses result from predation, which data will help inform the conservation grazing program going forward.

President Riffle requested clarification regarding the proposed rental reduction rate.

Mr. Sharp Chaney stated the rent reduction is to recognize the relatively high predation rate being experienced by District tenants, as compared to grazing operations on nearby properties. Additionally, the reduction recognizes the tenants' commitment to support the District's conservation grazing management goals and provide information to assist predation research and tracking efforts.

Director Kishimoto provided comments regarding the discussion and deliberations by the Planning and Natural Resources Committee on the topic, including the importance of working with and outreach to partners and stakeholders, clarifying the purpose of conservation grazing and associated goals, etc.

Public comment opened at 6:22 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth read the submitted comments into the record.

Ron Sturgeon suggested including language referencing the proposed 25% rent rate reduction in the grazing management policy amendment. Mr. Sturgeon also thanked the Board and the District for their attention to this issue.

Public comment closed at 6:25 p.m.

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone stated tenant lease rates are set in the individual grazing tenant leases and require Board approval. District staff will amend the tenant leases to include the lowered rental rates.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested including the proposed 25% rental reduction rate in the grazing management policy amendment.

Mr. Malone stated the current rates would also need to be referenced in the policy, and the rental rates fluctuate based on beef rates. The grazing management policy is more general in nature.

Director Kishimoto supported including the reduction of rental rates in the motion and could reference the information as set out in the staff report.

Director Hassett stated the general nature of the grazing management policy will allow the District to adapt to future predation levels.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded the motion:

1. Approve the proposed Grazing Management Policy amendments with any additional changes as requested by the Board of Directors.
2. Authorize the General Manager to make amendments to existing grazing leases, to include updated lease provisions, a reduction in rent rate, increases in predation compensation, and other changes as set out in the staff report, consistent with the proposed Grazing Management Policy amendments.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 7:00 p.m.

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

President Riffle called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Larry Hassett, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle, and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: Karen Holman

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Public Affairs Manager Kori Skinner, Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight, Management Analyst II Mindy Vargas, Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg

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ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth announced no comments were submitted.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

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

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public comment opened at 7:14 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments were submitted for the consent calendar.

Public comment closed at 7:14 p.m.

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Siemens the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

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

1. **Approval of the minutes for the following Board meetings:**
 - **January 13, 2021**
 - **January 20, 2021**
 - **January 27, 2021**
2. **Claims Report**
3. **Quarter 2 Proposed Budget Amendments to the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2021 (R-21-23)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution approving the proposed Quarter 2 budget amendments for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.

4. **Minor Amendment to a Memorandum of Understanding with San Mateo Resource Conservation District for the Regional Climate Adaptation Planning Project (R-21-21)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to execute an amendment in the amount of \$1,000 to the Memorandum of Understanding with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District to add a presentation to the Board of Directors on the results of the Regional Climate Adaptation Planning Project, for an amended contract total of \$50,999.

5. **Award of Contract through Cooperative Purchasing for Software and Professional Services to Implement an Electronic Document Management System and Convert Documents to a Digital Format (R-21-16)**

General Manager's Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to enter into a one-year contract with ECS Imaging, Inc., a license service provider of Laserfiche, for a not-to-exceed amount of \$180,950 that includes:

- a) a not-to-exceed amount of \$30,950 for Laserfiche document management cloud software;
- b) a not-to-exceed amount of \$50,000 for software implementation services; and
- c) a not-to-exceed amount of \$100,000 for scanning and indexing of District records.

BOARD BUSINESS

6. **Overview of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Onboarding Program for New Employees (R-21-24)**

Director Holman joined the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

Management Analyst II Mindy Vargas provided the staff presentation describing the District's

New Employee Onboarding Program, including the role of onboarding, checklists used to guide onboarding and fully integrate new employees into the District, and adaptations made for virtual onboarding during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director Hassett inquired how the District's history is shared with the new employees.

Ms. Vargas reported the District's history is included in the new employee welcome event, which occurs regularly based on the number of new employees.

Public comment opened at 7:28 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 7:28 p.m.

No Board action required.

7. 2021 Legislative Program (R-21-25)

Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg described the District's legislative program, its purpose, and reviewed the District's legislative priorities for the upcoming 2021-22 legislative session, including supporting efforts to promote effective guidelines for wildland fire fuel reduction, expand the number of green jobs for youth and expand access to greenspace for underserved communities, sponsoring legislation to support nuisance abatement powers (similar to other local agencies), and pursuing climate change-related funding to benefit a wide range of open space priorities. Additionally, the District seeks to strengthen organizational capacity and long-term financial sustainability to fulfill the mission, such as supporting efforts by the California Natural Resources Agency to streamline permitting processes for environmental restoration and stewardship projects. Finally, Mr. Hugg described proposed changes to the legislative program as recommended by the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee.

Director Kishimoto suggested including a priority related to additional traffic enforcement along Highway 84 in a future legislative program.

Mr. Hugg suggested traffic calming measures could potentially relate to wildlife connectivity and corridors.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired if grant funding opportunities could be pursued for conservation grazing and infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Hugg stated this can be integrated into the legislative program policy positions.

Director Holman expressed concern regarding the regional/local priority related to Plan Bay Area 2050 and asked that it more closely resemble the priority related to the Regional Housing Needs Allocation.

Director Siemens suggested adding an item to support public transit options for accessing public open space and parks.

Public comment opened at 8:14 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 8:14 p.m.

Motion: Director Siemens moved, and Director Hassett seconded the motion to adopt the 2021 Legislative Program as recommended by the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee, as amended above, to set the legislative priorities and policies for Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

8. Oral Update on Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District COVID-19 Response

Ms. Ruiz provided updates related to COVID-19 vaccinations for District rangers as emergency personnel stating many opted into the vaccination program and will be fully vaccinated by early March.

Ms. Woodworth provided information regarding options for public oral comments and video sharing by virtual meeting panelists.

The members of the Board requested and received clarifying information regarding the timelines and procedures for oral public comments and panelist videos.

By consensus the Board directed staff to move forward with options to implement oral public comments and panelist videos and report back to the Board at a future Board meeting.

Public comment opened at 8:52 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 8:52 p.m.

No Board action required.

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDA

- Real Property Committee (RPC) Update – Criteria for Determining Which Transactions to Bring Before the RPC for Review

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Director Kishimoto reported the Lehigh Quarry ad hoc committee met on January 28, 2021 to discuss the reclamation design and ecological focus memo and draft a letter regarding the District’s concerns with the quarry’s application to Santa Clara County to expand their operation.

Director Cyr reported the Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee met on February 2, 2021 to discuss the 2021 Legislative Program.

B. Staff Reports

Ms. Ruiz reported the District's Leadership Academy graduation will be held on February 17, 2021, and directors are invited to attend.

Public Affairs Manager Kori Skinner provided an update on the District's 50th anniversary plans.

Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak reported the District won an award from the Governmental Finance Officer Association and the California Society of Municipal Financial Officers for the fiscal year 2020-21 budget book.

C. Director Reports

Director Kishimoto suggested inviting Dr. Rick Lanman to speak to the Board regarding the historic role of and reintroduction of tule elk and other wildlife to the San Mateo Coast.

By consensus the board directed staff to invite Dr. Lanman to speak at an upcoming Board meeting.

President Riffle thanked the Board, staff and the members of the Board Self-Evaluation ad hoc committee for their work in preparation for and during the Board retreat on Monday. President Riffle reported he will be attending the virtual State of the Valley conference on February 23 and 24, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District into closed session at 9:21 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING – CLOSED SESSION

President Riffle called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 9:21 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Larry Hassett, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle, and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Real Senior Real Property Agent Allen Ishibashi

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1. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS (Government Code Section 54956.8)

Property: San Mateo County APN: 078-260-030
Agency Negotiator: Allen Ishibashi, Senior Real Property Agent
Negotiating Party: Camas Steinmetz, ESQ. and Bob Dooley
Under Negotiation: Easement Exchange Terms

Public comment opened at 9:21 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no public comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 9:21 p.m.

The Board convened into closed session at 9:22 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 10:02 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk