



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

February 25, 2021
Board Meeting 21-07

SPECIAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Thursday, February 25, 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, 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, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Senior Resources Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter

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.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0

1. Public Hearing to Receive Public Comment on the *Wildland Fire Resiliency Program Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (R-21-32)*

General Manager Ana Ruiz provided a high-level overview of the proposed Wildland Fire Resiliency Program describing its two main goals to enhance ecosystem resiliency and increase wildland fire management.

Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter provided the staff report describing the area of analysis for the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program and the program objectives. Mr. Sifuentes-Winter outlined the development of the proposed Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, including public meetings, public and agency feedback, consultant research, etc. Mr. Sifuentes-Winter described the California Environmental Quality Act process, including the public comment period for the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Mr. Sifuentes-Winter summarized the vegetation management plan, prescribed fire plan, monitoring plan, and pre-fire and advisor maps for planning, which are all included in the proposed Wildland Fire Resiliency Program.

Tania Treis with Panorama Environmental provided an overview of the CEQA process to date and described the purpose of the EIR. Ms. Treis outlined the purpose of the CEQA review process and scoping, and listed the environmental resources addressed in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the alternatives analysis. Ms. Treis described several potential significant impacts that are fully mitigated to a less than significant level using District best management practices and measures and program-specific mitigation measures.

Director Holman joined the meeting at 5:23 p.m.

Ms. Treis reviewed the potentially significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, including impacts to aesthetics, greenhouse gas emissions, and air quality impacts, which are typical of this type of program or project. Additionally, Ms. Treis described the various mitigation measures to minimize the impacts, such as consideration of vista points, dust control measures, and limits regarding prescribed burns. Finally, Ms. Treis explained the alternatives evaluated in the EIR.

Mr. Sifuentes-Winter described various methods for the public to provide input and how comments will be addressed in the Program EIR.

President Riffle opened the public hearing to receive public comment on the *Wildland Fire Resiliency Program Draft Program Environmental Impact Report* at 5:36 p.m.

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

Norm DePeau commented on the District's responsibility to maintain private roads crossing its land, and proposed including wording describing the need to clear vegetation beyond the edge of pavement on private roads that cross District property, similar to the Town of Los Gatos

The Board recessed at 5:40 p.m. and reconvened at 5:45 p.m.

Janssen Liston, resident of the Overlook Road community near El Sereno Open Space Preserve, expressed concerns related to fire hazards at and near El Sereno. An additional 182 acres were

recently added to the preserve and should be mapped and included in the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program.

Peter Kelley expressed concerns regarding to parking and traffic congestion and management at the Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. Parking and traffic congestion at this location may impair emergency access and evacuation routes.

Karen Maki inquired how the District will balance vegetation removal for wildland fire prevention with the desire to increase carbon sequestration.

Matt Morley, Town of Los Gatos Public Works Director, supported the District's Wildland Fire Resiliency Program and stated vegetation management along roadways should be prioritized.

Susan Lessin suggested the District encourage Pacific Gas & Electric to inspect its wires within District lands and repair any deficiencies.

President Riffle closed the public hearing closed at 5:57 p.m.

Director Kishimoto suggested labeling additional roads on the various maps because this information may be helpful to neighbors and to help orient those reviewing the documents.

Director Kishimoto inquired regarding the use of prescribed fires at the state level or by other agencies.

Mr. Sifuentes-Winter commented the CalFire project, which includes use of prescribed fire throughout California, had a significant unavoidable impact associated with it included in its EIR.

No Board action required.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 5:59 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk