



SPECIAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Wednesday, December 15, 2021

The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with California Government Code section 54953(e) and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Resolution 21-33. All Board members and staff participated via teleconference.

DRAFT MINUTES

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

President Riffle called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 4:00 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, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Public Affairs Manager Kori Skinner, Administrative Assistant Dounghai Burriss, Public Affairs Specialist II Ryan McCauley

President Riffle announced this meeting is being held in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e) and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Resolution 21-33, 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 Holman joined the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments had been submitted

SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

- Introduction of staff
 - Public Affairs Administrative Assistant DOUNGCHAI BURRISS
 - Public Affairs Specialist II RYAN MCCAULEY

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public comment opened at 4:08 p.m.

Ms. Woodworth reported no comments had been submitted for the Consent Calendar.

Public comment closed at 4:08 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

1. Approve the minutes for the following Board meetings:

- November 10, 2021
- December 1, 2021
- December 8, 2021
- December 9, 2021

2. Teleconferenced Board Meetings Pursuant to the Brown Act and Assembly Bill 361 (R-21-170)

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution affirming findings on the continued need for remote teleconferenced public meetings pursuant to AB 361.

3. Adoption of a Resolution Approving the 2021 San Mateo County Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (R-21-173)

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution approving the 2021 San Mateo County Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan as follows:

- Volume 1 – Planning Area Wide Elements; and
- Volume 2 - Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Annex Plan

4. Resolution for Grant Funding from the California Department of Parks and Recreation Specified Grants Program (R-21-175)

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution authorizing the General Manager to apply for funding from the Local Assistance Specified Grants Program that is administered through the California Department of Parks and Recreation and enter into two grant agreements totaling \$10,000,000 for the following two projects: (1) Cloverdale Ranch Land Conservation Project (\$8,000,000) and (2) Highway 17 Wildlife and Trail Crossings Project (\$2,000,000).

5. Resolution for Measure K Grant Funding from San Mateo County (R-21-176)

General Manager's Recommendation: Adopt a resolution authorizing the General Manager to enter into a grant agreement for \$500,000 of San Mateo County Measure K grant funding for the proposed Cloverdale Ranch Land Conservation Project.

6. Purisima-to-the-Sea Regional Trail and Parking Area Project Vision and Goals (R-21-174)

General Manager's Recommendation: Review and confirm the revised Purisima-to-the-Sea Regional Trail and Parking Area Project vision and goals, including modifications as directed by the Board of Directors during the December 1, 2021 Special Board meeting, to guide the future selection of a preferred regional trail alignment and development of conceptual parking area design alternatives.

BOARD BUSINESS

7. Agricultural Policy Development (R-21-169)

Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington provided the staff presentation describing the District's coastal service plan mission statement and the number of acres of agricultural land currently under District management. Mr. Lenington reviewed the proposed process and timeline for developing the District's agricultural policy.

Real Property Manager Mike Williams reviewed the District's agricultural conservations actions, including partnership actions with the Peninsula Open Space Trust to protect privately-owned farmland, such as at South Cowell and Johnston Ranches.

Ben Wright, Director of Land Transactions with POST, described its work with farmers to ensure prime agricultural lands and row crop properties remain as agricultural open space lands and prevent future conversion or development. Mr. Wright described various farm improvement projects, including outbuilding and water infrastructure, housing, etc., completed on agricultural properties and summarized various funding sources for POST's agricultural initiatives.

Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director for the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD), summarized the types of technical assistance and support the RCD provides to agricultural producers on the San Mateo Coast. Projects include addressing water infrastructure needs, researching and monitoring for best practices, and supporting agricultural viability.

Director Hassett inquired regarding the impact of the partners applying for and securing funding as opposed to independent farmers that may apply for funding on their own.

Ms. Nelson stated the RCD typically applies for the funding for the farmers. For some of the projects, the regulatory compliance, permitting, etc., are extremely complex, so resource conservation districts throughout the state typically support farmers in their area.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired regarding potential areas where the District could partner with POST and the RCD in the future.

Mr. Wright and Ms. Nelson described potential future projects to support water infrastructure, combat climate change and greenhouse gases, etc., that may need additional resources and funding.

President Riffle inquired regarding potential needs for the next several years to support agriculture on the San Mateo Coast.

Mr. Wright commented regarding the changes to the successful business model for agricultural operations on the San Mateo Coast to move towards smaller operations that are flexible and also the need for partners to be flexible, such as allowing agricultural tourism, etc.

Ms. Nelson commented on the increasing complexity of farming and the need to help simplify the regulatory processes, where possible, for agricultural producers by providing technical expertise and support.

Mr. Lenington reviewed nine different agricultural policy elements and described the District's current role in implementing the elements and potential policy direction alternatives the Board may consider for each. The elements include resource management and restoration; land protection; diversity, equity and inclusion; workforce housing; agricultural infrastructure; water supply and water use; recreation and public access; agricultural use types; and marketing and promotion.

Public comment opened at 5:44 p.m.

Ms. Woodworth reported no public comments had been submitted.

Public comment closed at 5:44 p.m.

General Manager Ana Ruiz commented on the support the District received for Measure AA from the coastal and bayside portions of the District, and these Measure AA funds help support agriculture and agricultural preservation on the San Mateo Coast.

Director Holman spoke in support of farmworker housing and allowing intensive agricultural land uses with minimal inorganic pesticide use.

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone commented on the necessary complexity, transparency, and accountability the District brings to agricultural operations, such as related to water allocation, resource protection, environmental analysis, etc. However, due to the the transparency and accountability, the public trusts the District to properly manage agriculture

alongside natural resource protection. If the District allows intensive agricultural uses, the level of complexities and challenges will increase substantially.

Ms. Ruiz stated expanding allowed agricultural uses will require a significant expansion of District staff with relevant expertise to manage the new program and new challenges would arise related to the competing interests between resource protection and intensive agricultural production.

Mr. Lenington commented on the District's success in managing natural resources alongside agricultural uses and stated tradeoffs will be necessary if intensive agricultural uses are allowed.

Director Holman left the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

The Board members provided feedback on the potential role of the District on the elements of the agricultural policy.

Director Siemens spoke in support of the District helping to fund partners who would take the lead in preserving intensive agricultural uses. He also spoke in support of the District pursuing regenerative and other non-conventional eco-sustainable grazing practices.

Director Kishimoto supported the pursuit of regenerative and other non-conventional eco-sustainable grazing practices and spoke regarding environmental challenges on the San Mateo Coast. Director Kishimoto suggested the District may advocate and/or educate for environmental protection and coastal management without owning the agricultural land.

Director Cyr stated he supports the District's current agricultural management scope but would be interested in assisting partners with funding to support their efforts in preserving intensive agricultural uses and also spoke in support of eco-sustainable grazing practices.

Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in support of expanding the District's agricultural policy scope to allow for additional flexibility to be a supportive partner to agricultural producers as new challenges arise. Director Kersteen-Tucker commented on the connection between the District's support of climate resiliency and local agriculture.

Director Hassett stated the District already funds partners to preserve intensive agricultural lands and any additional funding should be a slow process.

President Riffle agreed that additional flexibility is needed to support agriculture.

Mr. Lenington provided comments regarding the District's current role in protecting land with intensive agricultural uses and how a potential expansion of funding could operate. Additionally, Mr. Lenington stated staff can gather more information about the potential implementation of eco-sustainable grazing practices, which would necessitate prescriptive requirements for District grazing tenants.

Director Kersteen-Tucker commented on the increasing difficulty for agricultural producers on the San Mateo Coast and the need to continue the District's mission to preserve agricultural land. Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in support of setting aside additional existing District housing as farmworker housing rather than building new housing. Finally, if the District creates additional

prescriptive limits, the District should be flexible in what is allowed, such as agricultural tourism.

Director Siemens spoke in support of the District providing land for agricultural workforce housing but not building the housing. Additionally, the District can secure agricultural or conservation easements for land with intensive agricultural uses to help support POST efforts to continue private ownership of farmland.

President Riffle commented on the continued need for POST to act as a partner due to its ability to be flexible as a non-government agency. Additionally, the District can do more to educate the public on the importance of supporting agriculture on the San Mateo Coast.

Mr. Lenington spoke in support of the District's current partnerships with POST and the RCD and the District's continued role of protecting natural resources. Mr. Lenington stated additional direction for prioritizing natural resource protection and agricultural uses will be included in the proposed agricultural policy.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested staff consider increasing the District's role in marketing and promotion

Director Kishimoto suggested the District may want to comment more regularly on agricultural planning and policy within San Mateo County as a whole and not just for District-owned properties.

The Board members expressed interest in expanding the District's funding and support provided to partners that preserve intensive agricultural lands and highlighted the need to balance the priority of natural resource protection.

No Board action required.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Director Cyr reported the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee met on December 14, 2021 to discuss the grantmaking and legislative programs.

B. Staff Reports

Ms. Woodworth reported the District was recently awarded the Special District Leadership Foundation's Transparency Certificate of Excellence.

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

C. Director Reports

President Riffle announced he appointed Director Kersteen-Tucker to serve on the ad hoc committee to plan for an upcoming Board retreat instead of himself.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District into closed session at 7:14 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT – CLOSED SESSION

President Riffle called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:14 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, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Senior Real Property Agent Allen Ishibashi, Controller Mike Foster

1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - EXISTING LITIGATION.

Government Code 54956.9(d)1)

Zellerbach v. MROSD et al.

Santa Clara County Superior Court Case No. 20-CV-365990

2. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION. Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)

**Title of Employee: Controller
General Counsel
General Manager**

Public comment opened at 7:15 p.m.

Ms. Woodworth reported no public comments were submitted for these items.

Public comment closed at 7:15 p.m.

The Board convened into closed session at 7:30 p.m.

Director Holman joined the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 9:05 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk