



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: January 25, 2023

MEMO TO: Board of Directors

THROUGH: Ana Ruiz, General Manager *AR*

FROM: Korrine Skinner, Public Affairs Manager

SUBJECT: Ombudspersons Summary Report for July 2021-December 2022 Activities

SUMMARY

Per the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) Ombudsperson Program procedures, this report summarizes ombudsperson contacts received between July 1, 2021 and December 31, 2022. One inquiry was received through the ombudsperson website contact form during this period, and it was successfully resolved by staff without assistance from an ombudsperson.

DISCUSSION

The District established a volunteer ombudsperson program to facilitate interactions with citizens as required by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) during the 2004 annexation of coastal San Mateo County. Under the program, the role of the ombudsperson is to listen to resident concerns; open avenues of communication between residents and neighbors and the District; gather information and educate residents on District policies or procedures and their purpose or effect; facilitate conflict resolution; find other resources to meet resident needs, if applicable; and provide a written summary of citizen concerns as requested by the Board of Directors. Members of the public may request contact with an ombudsperson via a form on the District website, after first attempting to resolve their concerns with staff.

On January 11, 2017, the Board expanded the Ombudsperson Program by appointing a pool of three qualified volunteers to serve as ombudspersons: Lisa Zadek of Half Moon Bay, Kristen Yawitz of Belmont, and Bob Rosenberg of San Jose. Per the ombudsperson program procedures, the appointed ombudspersons provide an annual summary of activities, including whether they are willing to continue service. This report summarizes the activities of the appointed ombudspersons for July 1, 2021 and December 31, 2022 (Attachment 1), all of whom have indicated a willingness to continue their service through December 2023.

For this period, a single inquiry was received. Staff responded promptly to resolve the issue satisfactorily.

NEXT STEPS

In following the ombudsperson program procedures, District staff observed opportunities for improvements and efficiencies to the program. Those recommendations will be brought before the Board as part of the Good Neighbor Policy update, the start of which was delayed by the COVID-19 response in 2021 and the 50th Anniversary Celebrations in 2022. In January 2023, work has commenced on moving the policy update forward.

Attachment

1. Ombudspersons Report July 2021-December 2022



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Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: January 25, 2023

MEMO TO: Board of Directors

THROUGH: Ana Ruiz, General Manager

FROM: Bob Rosenberg, Kristen Yawitz and Lisa Zadek, Appointed Ombudspersons

SUBJECT: Ombudsperson Report for the Time Period of July 2021 through December 2022

As appointed ombudspersons for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District), we submit this report of program activities for the time period of July 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022. Over that period, one inquiry was received through the ombudsperson contact form on *openspace.org*, and that inquiry was resolved through staff discussion and did not warrant ombudsperson assistance. This inquiry is described below.

On June 20, 2022, Mr. Basim Jaber submitted a message through the ombudsperson contact form to express a concern about “sideshows” in the parking area at the Mount Umunhum Summit. Mr. Jaber reported that vehicles were driven through the parking area in such a way as to leave skid marks and burnouts. Mr. Jaber suggested installing wheel/tire stops and speedbumps on both lanes of parking area.

On June 24, Mr. Jaber’s concern was addressed by Foothills Area Superintendent Brad Pennington, who conveyed that staff had analyzed options and would move forward with installing wheel stops and speed bumps, and that he would increase Ranger patrols to help stop the behavior. Staff reports that the wheels stops and speed bumps were installed and no further skid marks have been reported. Mr. Jaber conveyed that he was satisfied with the resolution.

In addition, we would like to report to the Board that each of us is willing to serve as volunteer ombudspersons through December 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Rosenberg
Ombudsperson, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Kristen Yawitz
Ombudsperson, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Lisa Zadek
Ombudsperson, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District