



SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

*The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with
California Government Code section 54953.*

DRAFT MINUTES

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

President Kishimoto called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 6:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Craig Gleason, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Margaret McNiven, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Karen Holman

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria

President Kishimoto announced this meeting is being held in accordance with Government Code section 54953. 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.

Director Holman arrived at 6:05 p.m.

**1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL, EXISTING LITIGATION, 2 Cases
(Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1))**

1. *Ashford v. Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District*; Santa Clara County Superior Court Case Number 22CV407741

2. *Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District v. Ashford*; Santa Clara County Superior Court Case Number 23CV410606

Public comment opened at 6:06 p.m.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 6:06 p.m.

The Board convened into closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

President Kishimoto 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 Kishimoto called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Yoriko Kishimoto, Margaret McNiven, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Zoe Kersteen-Tucker

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Governmental Affairs Program Manager Josh Hugg, Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight, Public Affairs Manager Kori Skinner, Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter

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CLOSED SESSION REPORT

President Kishimoto reported the Board convened in closed session and no reportable action was taken.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Kersteen-Tucker absent)

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public comment opened at 7:07 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 7:07 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Kersteen-Tucker absent)

1. **Approve the December 14, 2022 Board meeting minutes**
2. **Approve Claims Report**
3. **Extension to an Agreement with the City of Mountain View to provide the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District with Radio Dispatch Services (R-23-28)**

General Manager’s Recommendation: Authorize the General Manager to approve a five-year contract extension with the City of Mountain View to provide 24-hour radio dispatch services for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$1,553,034. Annual not-to-exceed amounts would be as follows: \$281,060 for Fiscal Year 2023-24 (FY24), \$295,113 for FY25, \$309,869 for FY26, \$325,362 for FY27, and \$341,630 for FY28.

BOARD BUSINESS

4. **Legislative Position Recommendations (R-23-29)**

Governmental Affairs Program Manager Josh Hugg provided the staff presentation stating that there were 2,700 bills released this legislative session. The bills went through a vetting process by the District’s lobbyist and department managers to review all key bills of interest and identify recommended positions and priorities for each. Based on their review, approximately 140 bills are currently being tracked, and at this time, 6 bills are recommended as priority 1 and 25 bills as priority 2.

Board members requested and received clarification regarding various legislative bills.

President Kishimoto inquired if there could be a consideration to support AB 99 (State highways: vegetation management: herbicides and pesticide) with conditions.

Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter expressed his concerns with AB 99 and stated that an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach could be supported as an IPM approach seeks to minimize the use of herbicides. He also spoke about the issues with mowing and how it can spread invasive species. In addition, some species react differently to mowing, such as French Broom, which become much bushier, increasing the fire risk greatly after 3 years.

President Kishimoto inquired if staff could add in the summary that the District would propose the use of an IPM approach.

Mr. Hugg reported that he reviewed the proposed language by Assemblymember Connolly's office and noted that counties seeking to prohibit herbicide use will prioritize alternative methods when it is possible.

Public comment opened at 7:42 p.m.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 7:42 p.m.

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and Director Gleason seconded to approve the recommended list of legislative positions for the 2023 state legislative session.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Kersteen-Tucker absent)

5. Oral Presentation – Human Resources Department Overview

Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight provided an overview of the Human Resource Department. Ms. Basnight reviewed the departmental core functions, organizational chart, and reporting structure. Ms. Basnight highlighted programs within the Human Resources department such as recruitment, classification and compensation, benefits, employee relations, training and development, employee recognition, safety compliance, workforce planning, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Director Holman complimented Ms. Basnight, saying she admires her can-do attitude and sense of humor, and thanked her for her work.

Director Riffle requested to receive a future briefing of the DEI program.

General Manager Ana Ruiz stated that a DEI briefing would most likely be presented to the Board during summer of 2023.

Director Gleason inquired if the DEI staff committee is focused primarily on the organization itself or also focused externally.

Ms. Basnight stated that the DEI staff committee includes two subcommittees, one focused on internal matters and the other focused on external matters, such as community engagement and drawing visitors to District preserves.

Director Cyr complimented staff and stated that the staff are the most cohesive, creative, and friendly staff of any organization. Furthermore, that the Human Resources department is a significant component of the organization.

General Manager Ruiz commented that Ms. Basnight has been a tremendous asset to the District and described her as a thought partner. They frequently discuss the organization, and Ms. Basnight was commended for her leadership and thoughtfulness. Ms. Ruiz, complimented her and the Human Resources team on their efforts, noting that they routinely manage numerous tasks and functions at once despite the extra workload that has been added such as furthering the agency's DEI efforts and carrying out the Strategic Leadership Training Program.

President Kishimoto on behalf of the Board of Directors thanked Ms. Basnight and her team for their work.

Public comment opened at 8:16 p.m.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 8:16 p.m.

6. Oral Presentation - Public Affairs Department Overview

Public Affairs Manager Kori Skinner provided an overview of the Public Affairs Department, presenting on the departmental purpose and core functions, including management of editorial content, social media, website content, legislative relations, media relations, and general community outreach. Ms. Skinner reviewed the current fiscal year priority one and two projects, the departmental structure, and the communications path for increasing public engagement of District activities.

Director Cyr thanked Ms. Skinner and the team for their efforts and expressed gratitude for their ability to create a vision for the 50th anniversary celebrations and move forward with it.

President Kishimoto expressed her appreciation for Ms. Skinner's efforts to create a solid strategic framework for public communications and public relations.

General Manager Ruiz commended Ms. Skinner's efforts, particularly those related to the District's 50th anniversary, for achieving the goal of having the events and activities involve all facets of the community to be part of the celebration while also inspiring the public to continue to be part of District activities. In addition, she thanked Ms. Skinner for always pushing the boundary a little bit further by coming up with new ideas that have been beneficial for the District and the public.

President Kishimoto extended the Board of Director's appreciation to her and the department.

Public comment opened at 8:37 p.m.

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 8:37 p.m.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

No committee reports.

B. Staff Reports

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone provided an update on preserve closures in light of the approaching high winds and rainstorms, in particular along the ridgeline where significant snow damage has already occurred.

C. Director Reports

Director Riffle reported that he attended a virtual presentation given by Green Foothills and hosted by the Los Altos History Museum honoring Wallace Stegner. The presentation provided background for the public about Green Foothills and, during the presentation, the District was mentioned several times and praised for the work it has done.

Director MacNiven reported she attend the Farm Bureau meeting on Monday, March 5.

President Kishimoto reported that a brown bag meeting occurred on February 23, in honor of Black History month, telling the story of “Sam” Emmanuel McDonald. It was well attended, and the speaker was outstanding. President Kishimoto also reported that she attended a BCDC meeting on March 2. She acknowledged the staff for an excellent presentation at the March 7 Board Retreat. She also mentioned a meeting she attended with the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail on March 8.

Director Holman reported that the Palo Alto City Council considered whether to allow e-bikes in its four nature preserves and ultimately decided to follow the District's lead using the District's year-long study and analysis.

Director Gleason reported that he attended and enjoyed the February 23 brown bag meeting, and that he attended a Bay Area Ridge Trail advocacy meeting and reported that they have updated some of their plans in the south bay, which partly involves the area around Sierra Azul. He suggested receiving a presentation from the Bay Area Ridge Trail to learn more about their new plans.

ADJOURNMENT

President Kishimoto adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District into a special meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC
District Clerk