



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

**MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**  
**LEGISLATIVE, FUNDING, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office  
5050 El Camino Real  
Los Altos, CA 94022

**Tuesday, March 28, 2023**

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

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Director Kersteen-Tucker called the meeting of the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee to order at 1:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present: Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Margaret MacNiven

Members absent: Jed Cyr

Staff present: General Manager Ana M. Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Public Affairs Manager Korrine Skinner, Public Affairs Specialist II Natalie Jolly

Director Kersteen-Tucker 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.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** Director MacNiven moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Cyr absent)**

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

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

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**1. Select Committee Chair for 2023 Calendar Year**

Director Kersteen-Tucker nominated Director MacNiven to serve as the Committee Chair for calendar year 2023.

Director MacNiven accepted the nomination.

Public comment opened at 1:02 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 1:02 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to selected Director MacNiven as Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2023.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Cyr absent)**

**2. Approve the November 15, 2022 Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Public comment opened at 1:03 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 1:03 p.m.

**Motion:** Director MacNiven moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded the motion to approve the November 15, 2022 Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee meeting minutes.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**3. Modification to the Monetary Gift Acknowledgement Policy Language (R-23-36)**

Public Affairs Specialist II Natalie Jolly provided the staff presentation on a proposed language modification to Board Policy 5.01 – *Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition* to acknowledge all gifts annually in a standard publication regardless of and without specifying the gift amount. Ms. Jolly reviewed the modified language, and the tiered dollar amounts of what type of recognition the donor would receive. Ms. Jolly stated that current policy only acknowledges donations of \$10,000 or more in a District publication. However, staff recently discovered that for several years, all donors were being recognized annually in a District publication. The

recommended language modification would continue the acknowledgement of all donors, regardless of dollar amount, unless a specific request is made to exclude the donor from the acknowledgement. In addition, the modification will also allow more flexibility in gift acknowledgements to streamline the workflow, reduce staff time, and postage costs since an increasing number of the unsolicited cash gifts are received through a link on openspace.org instead of via check. Now with digital donations, donors receive a thank you right away for the contribution.

Director Kersteen-Tucker commented that she is glad that recognition gifts are now optional as some donors have expressed the preference not to receive a gift and she is also glad that all donors are being acknowledged because even small gifts are really important and mean a lot to the District.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired whether donations made through the website only receive a thank you email.

Public Affairs Manager Kori Skinner stated that if the donor provides their email address, they will receive an email, otherwise a thank you letter will be mailed.

Chair MacNiven commented that when she sat on another nonprofit board and online donations were received, the donor would not provide their mailing address and assumed their preference of communication was only through email. For this reason, she suggests that if a donor does not provide a mailing address, it should be fine with only sending a thank you letter via email.

Public comment opened at 1:12 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 1:12 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to forward the Modification to the Monetary Gift Acknowledgment Policy language to the Board of Directors for approval.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Cyr absent)**

**4. Implementation Plan for Updating Board Policy 5.02 – *Good Neighbor Policy* (R-23-37)**

Public Affairs Specialist II Natalie Jolly provided the staff presentation on the Implementation Plan for Updating Board Policy 5.02 – *Good Neighbor Policy*, including the background on the policy, latest revisions, and the seven-step proposed implementation plan for new updates.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired about the definition of neighbors as residents and property owners adjacent or close to a preserve and if the definition of neighbors should be defined more broadly or have a second category for communities that are interested in the Good Neighbor Policy, such as La Honda, City of Half Moon Bay, and the unincorporated areas of the coastline.

Ms. Skinner stated that in early 2020, staff did consider looking at the policy more broadly and adding how notification and outreach is conducted, but the policy provisions are very specific and relate to neighbors with geographic adjacency.

General Manager Ana Ruiz commented that if there is interest to review the District's notification and outreach strategies for the broader community, those could be reviewed separately as part of another policy or a new stand-alone policy as the Good Neighbor Policy is specific to those properties and property owners that are within close proximity to preserves.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested making a reference to the larger community or to policies that pertain to broader community outreach and notification. She mentioned that she is sensitive on the coast to how much people are aware of their neighbors who live around the preserves and how that influences their opinions.

General Manager Ruiz stated that she would take this suggestion back to staff to see how they can make the appropriate reference in the policy and will note to the Board that staff will be revisiting the separate notification and outreach policies after reviewing the Good Neighbor Policy.

Public comment opened at 1:25 p.m.

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

Public comment closed at 1:25 p.m.

General Manager Ruiz reported one written comment was received.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked if staff will respond or reach out to the commenter.

General Manager Ruiz confirmed staff will respond.

Director Kersten-Tucker commented she is excited to see the policy update move forward and is in favor of the recommendation.

Chair MacNiven commented that she is glad that the Good Neighbor Policy started in 1988. Before then, there were conflicts, a few of which are still present in her community. The District has done a great job over the last thirty-five years, and attitudes have been changing along with a greater focus on neighborhood safety. The rangers do a great job and are always willing to help and suggests adding language in the policy to emphasize a consistency in District ranger response across neighborhoods and neighbors. Additionally, she suggests adding the Portola Park Heights Property Owners Association as a good neighbor.

Chair MacNiven commented that public notifications that are mailed to the public informing them of a meeting use too much jargon and can be difficult to understand. She suggests the notifications resemble the Views newsletter and include photos of the subject matter.

General Counsel Hilary Stevenson commented that the District has many polices that complement each other, and that the rangers have their administrative policies and regulations that touch some of the issues that Chair MacNiven discussed. Ms. Stevenson suggested

referencing those policies that complement the Good Neighbor Policy to make the policy more comprehensive.

General Manager Ruiz thanked Chair MacNiven for her feedback and will discuss with staff on how to modify future public notifications to make the notifications more user friendly and to include information that is clearer, simpler, and more welcoming to the public.

Ms. Skinner gave a summary of the postcard notifications, including information on when they were updated, who is the lead, and when and how the notifications are mailed. Ms. Skinner suggested the Directors notify her of a postcard notification that does not meet the standards so she can utilize it as a case study.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair MacNiven adjourned the meeting of the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee at 1:41 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC  
District Clerk