



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, April 25, 2023

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

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair MacNiven called the meeting of the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee to order at 2:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Zoe Kersteen-Tucker and Margaret MacNiven

Members absent: Jed Cyr

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Acting Deputy District Clerk Loana Lumina-Hsu, Public Affairs Manager Korrine Skinner, Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg

Chair MacNiven 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 Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

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

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Acting Deputy District Clerk Loana Lumina-Hsu reported there were no public speakers for this item.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the March 28, 2023 Legislative, Funding, & Public Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes.

Public comment opened at 2:03 p.m.

Ms. Lumina-Hsu reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:03 p.m.

Motion: Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director MacNiven seconded the motion to approve the March 28, 2023 Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs committee meeting minutes.

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

2. Legislative Positions for Consideration by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (R-23-41)

Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg provided the staff presentation and commented that at the March 8, 2023 meeting, the Board established formal positions on an initial set of legislation. Since then, several bills, originally designated as spot bills due to their non-substantive, placeholder and introductory language, were amended into a more substantive proposal. District staff reviewed the bills and identified a subset to consider for an actionable position. Staff is currently tracking approximately 140 bills and those that were previously introduced as spot bills and now contain substantive amended language. Additionally, staff is recommending thirteen priority 2 bills.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested additional information on measure Assembly Bill (AB) 817 and the ability for subsidiary bodies to participate in meetings virtually.

General Counsel Hilary Stevenson provided additional information and stated that there is much support by local elected officials to expand hybrid meetings.

Director Kersteen-Tucker commented that directors travel from two different counties, the District's large size and the ability to participate virtually would be beneficial in reducing greenhouse gas emissions due to travel.

Mr. Hugg explained there is a different bill staff is reviewing that applies to multi-county jurisdictions and removes barriers for remote meetings.

Ms. Stevenson explained that AB 817 would apply to subsidiary bodies that do not take a final action and may apply to the District's standing committees and the Bond Oversight Committee.

Director Kersteen-Tucker expressed her support in writing a support letter for AB 817.

Mr. Hugg confirmed staff will write a support letter.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested additional information on AB 68 land uses and housing.

Mr. Hugg explained the bill addresses housing in unincorporated areas, where much of the natural and working lands exist, and is the first bill that is brought forward in collaboration between an environmental entity and a pro-housing entity. The bill is sponsored by The Nature Conservancy and Yes In My Backyard (YIMBY).

The Nature Conservancy Project Director Abigail Ramsden provided additional information on AB 68. The Nature Conservancy joined the alliance for Climate and Housing Solutions composed of leaders in the housing, affordable housing, development community, and other environmental advocates to address housing challenges, biodiversity, and the protection of California lands through policy solutions. AB 68 streamlines housing in existing communities and allows local jurisdictions to apply for exemption from bill. The bill discourages development in high-risk fire and flood areas, and allows local jurisdictions to align their development goals and policies with community expectations.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked and received information on public outreach efforts.

Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in support of The Nature Conservancy's work in focusing housing within communities and near existing transportation corridors and schools to protect natural lands and wildlife corridors. Director Kersteen-Tucker asked how California coastal areas were taken into consideration.

Ms. Ramsden explained AB 68 addresses the agricultural workforce housing and development within the agricultural area, recognizing that this type of housing supports agricultural landscapes that are essential for food supplies, natural resource protection, economic growth, and the sustainability of local rural communities.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked about opponents to AB 68.

Ms. Ramsden explained the building industry, Chambers of Commerce, and environmental organizations often oppose CEQA reform. Ms. Ramsden explained The Nature Conservancy does not usually support streamlining CEQA, however, the bill includes specific environmental protections.

Chair MacNiven spoke in support of The Nature Conservancy and the work bringing businesses to support conservation. Chair MacNiven expressed support for AB 68.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested additional information on AB 1322 and an explanation of the pesticide.

Mr. Hugg explained that the California Department of Pesticide Regulation has an existing list of pesticides that are not available for public use, and only available under specific circumstances. The bill will add the first-generation, anticoagulant rodenticide to this pesticide list, which is currently under review by the Department of Pesticide Regulation.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked for additional information on AB 824.

Mr. Hugg explained the bill is taking a more holistic approach to include urban greening as a form of habitat for migrating species. The bill would apply state-wide.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked if the bill is related to wildlife crossings.

Mr. Hugg explained it is not explicitly for wildlife crossings but will be an additional benefit for migrating species that nest in wildlife crossing areas.

Chair MacNiven expressed support for AB 824.

Mr. Hugg commented the Legislative Positions will be brought to the full Board of Directors with the Committee's recommendations.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked and received additional information for potential additional bills that may address recent the storm damages.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested AB 86 be followed should it need to move to the high priority list.

Public comment opened at 2:43 p.m.

Ms. Lumina-Hsu reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:43 p.m.

3. Oral Presentation and Discussion of Intergovernmental and Legislative Engagement Options for the Board

Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg provided the staff presentation on current legislative engagement practices; the District's federal, state, county, and cities legislative delegation; current intergovernmental engagement opportunities; and opportunities for the Board of Directors to participate in legislative processes.

General Manager Ana Ruiz mentioned every two years staff assists Board members with presentations at city council meetings, and this is a great opportunity to introduce the District, the work that is in progress, and volunteer opportunities for public awareness. Additionally, the engagements help to establish and cultivate a strong rapport with other elected officials.

Mr. Hugg commented a presentation is offered to the seventeen cities every other year: half of the cities have a presentation this year and the other half will be presented to in 2024. The first presentation will be held on May 16.

Ms. Ruiz explained the District hosts a legislative luncheon every other year at one of the preserves as an opportunity for the State and local elected bodies to meet with the Board and District staff. Additionally, the District hosts a legislative luncheon in Sacramento every other year.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested an approach for each level: city, county, state, and federal. Director Kersteen-Tucker stated city council presentations are held virtually and are a great way to reach out to the community. Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested presenting to the Board of Supervisors for San Mateo County and for Santa Clara County in addition to the current individual check-ins with the Supervisors.

Mr. Hugg explained the District is looking to enhance relationships with specific elected officials.

Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in support of current efforts by District staff in nurturing and fostering relationships with elected officials and suggested having an in-District luncheon in each county.

Mr. Hugg explained the in-District luncheon alternates locations between Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve and Cooley Landing Education Center for an enclosed facility.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked if there is an opportunity with AB 68 to talk with state senators and assemblymembers.

Mr. Hugg explained that specific legislation, such as AB 68, will be referred to multiple committees (Housing and Community Development Committee; Water Parks and Wildlife Committee; Natural Resources Committee). Depending on the delegations that are on each committee, early discussions generally are not very effective as the bill may or may not reach them for consideration.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested monthly or quarterly notifications to all Directors of future open houses held by other elected officials as an opportunity to meet and develop relationships with colleagues from other agencies.

Ms. Ruiz suggested email notifications can be forwarded to the Board and each Director can attend based on their availability.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested staff notify Directors of important engagement opportunities. Director Kersteen-Tucker asked if there are Federal-level environmental community lobbying that visit delegations and if the Board of Directors can be involved.

Mr. Hugg stated there the District does not normally schedule trips to Washington D.C., but East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) and the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (OSA) recently concluded trips with their agencies.

Director Kersteen-Tucker suggested the District, OSA, Together Bay Area, and EBRPD identify a combined agenda and make appointments to talk to representatives.

Chair MacNiven commented the most recent trip to Sacramento was on a Thursday and had low attendance since Thursdays are the days the legislators generally go home, thus lesson learned on visitation timing.

Director Kersteen-Tucker and Chair MacNiven spoke in support of meeting local delegates and officials.

Public comment opened at 3:12 p.m.

Ms. Lumina-Hsu reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 3:12 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair MacNiven adjourned the meeting of the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee at 3:12 p.m.

Loana Lumina-Hsu
Acting Deputy District Clerk