



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-26-86
Meeting 26-16
June 10, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 9

AGENDA ITEM

Annual Public Hearing and Report on Vacancies and Recruitment and Retention Efforts
(Assembly Bill 2561/Government Code Section 3502.3)

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

(5) *den*

Hold a public hearing to receive a report on vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts pursuant to Assembly Bill 2561/Government Code Section 3502.3. No formal Board action is required.

SUMMARY

AB 2561 requires public agencies, including Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District), to hold at least one public hearing per fiscal year to discuss vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts. This report describes vacancies and vacancy rates for calendar year 2025 and briefly summarizes recruitment and retention efforts. Review of this report is being presented at the same meeting as the public hearing on the Budget and Action Plan given its direct correlation to staff capacity and productivity.

DISCUSSION

AB 2561, effective January 1, 2025, was signed into law to address the issue of job vacancies in local government, which can adversely affect the delivery of public services and employee workload. Among other requirements, the bill requires public agencies to present the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts during a public hearing before the agency's governing body at least once per fiscal year. If the governing board adopts an annual or multiyear budget during the fiscal year, the presentation must be made prior to the adoption of the final budget.

During the hearing, the District is also required to identify whether there are any recommended changes to District policies, procedures, or recruitment activities (for example, budgetary changes), to improve the hiring process.

This legislation also provides recognized employee organizations for each bargaining unit with the opportunity to make presentations during the public hearing concerning vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts. There are two recognized bargaining units at the District, the Field Employees Association (FEA) and the Midpeninsula Rangers Peace Officers Association (POA). Additionally, if the vacancy rate in a bargaining unit is at least 20% of the total number of authorized full-time positions, the employee organization that represents the bargaining unit

may request that the agency present additional information at the public hearing. For the prior calendar year (2025), vacancies did not reach 20%; therefore this requirement is not triggered.

Vacancy Information – One-Day Snapshot for December 31, 2025

The law does not specify a timeframe for measuring vacancy rates. To ensure consistency year-over-year, the District reports this data as a one-day snapshot on December 31 each year. This method provides a precise, point-in-time measure of unfilled positions, ensuring comparability across reporting periods. This metric is provided as a standard practice by public agencies to effectively track the data over time. In contrast, the overall turnover rate reflects staff changes over the entire year, capturing the total number of departures and replacements. While turnover rates offer a broader view of workforce stability, vacancy rates serve as a focused indicator of staffing levels at a specific moment.

On December 31, 2025 (i.e., a one-day snapshot at the end of Calendar Year 2025), the District had 17 vacancies, equating to an overall 7.72% vacancy rate. The vacancy rate is calculated as the number of vacancies divided by the number of budgeted full-time equivalent positions (FTEs). The vacancy rate was calculated based on a total of 220.33 budgeted FTEs, which includes regular and limited term positions, as well as the Board-appointed General Manager, General Counsel, and Controller, and excludes seasonals, interns, and temporary employees. Of the 17 vacancies, five were in the FEA (two retirements, two voluntary separations, and one involuntary separation), none were in the POA (see explanation in the next paragraph) and the remaining 12 were unrepresented positions (one newly budgeted position, six due to internal promotions, one transfer, two retirements, one voluntary separation, and one involuntary separation). The vacancy rate for FEA positions was 11.4%, for POA positions was 0%, and for unrepresented positions was 8.5%.

Of the 12 unrepresented vacancies, two are Ranger Recruits, which are not represented by the POA. Once a Ranger Recruit successfully completes District requirements (including a District approved law enforcement training academy and California Penal Code 832 training), they are sworn in as peace officers and promoted to Ranger, which is when this position becomes a represented POA position. For illustrative purposes, if the two unrepresented Ranger Recruit positions are counted toward the POA vacancies, the POA vacancy rate would increase from 0% to 5.7% (two of 35 budgeted positions).

As of 12/31/2025	# of Vacancies	# of Budgeted FTEs	% Vacant (Vacancy Rate)
FEA	5	44	11.4%
POA	0	35 [^]	0.0%
Unrepresented	12 [*]	141.33	8.5%
DISTRICTWIDE TOTAL	17	220.33^{**}	7.72%

*Includes two unrepresented Ranger Recruit vacancies

[^]If the two unrepresented Ranger Recruit vacancies were included in the POA calculation, the POA vacancy rate would increase to 5.7%

^{**}Includes full-time, limited term, and Board appointed General Manager, General Counsel, and Controller. Excludes seasonals, interns, and temporary employees.

Recruitment and Retention Information for Calendar Year 2025

The total number of vacancies created during Calendar Year 2025 was 28, of which five (or 18%) were created by newly budgeted positions as recommended by the 2023 Financial and Operational Sustainability Model (FOSM) refresh. Additionally, 11 of the 28 vacancies (or 39%)

were created by existing employees promoting to other positions within the District (nine employees) and by existing employees laterally or otherwise transferring to other positions within the District (two employees). The remaining 12 vacancies (or 42%) were created as a result of four retirements, six voluntary separations, and two involuntary separations.

Calendar Year	Total Vacancies Created	Newly Budgeted Positions		Internal Transfer or Promotion		Separations or Retirement		Voluntary Separation	
		Count	% of Total Vacancies	Count	% of Total Vacancies	Count	% of Total Vacancies	Count	% of Total Vacancies
2025	28	5	18%	11	39%	6	21%	6	21%
2024	49	24	49%	13	27%	5	10%	7	14%

Turnover is calculated as the number of vacancies created by voluntary separation divided by the number of budgeted FTEs. Based on the six vacancies due to voluntary separations (two FEA positions and three unrepresented positions), the annual overall turnover rate was 2.72%.

Calendar Year	Total Vacancies Created	# of Budgeted FTEs as of 12/31/2025	Annual Staffing Turnover Rate
2025	28	220.33	2.72%
2024	49	210.33	3.33%

Recruitment and Retention Efforts and Strategies

There are currently nine Human Resources staff, three of whom are dedicated to recruiting, filling 29 vacancies in 2025 (excluding interns and seasonal employees). The District employs various recruitment strategies, including posting vacancies on the District’s website and recruitment portal (CalOpps.org), industry-specific job boards, and advertising on the District’s social media platforms. The District has been successful in filling positions, including Open Space Technician and Ranger, from the pipeline of viable candidates employed by the District as seasonal employees. Additionally, a few positions within the Administrative Office have been filled by individuals who completed an internship with the District.

As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance recruitment and retention, in 2025 the District implemented a new salary schedule based on the Board-approved changes to the compensation philosophy. In March 2026, the District hosted a regional Conservation Career Fair with over 800 interested people in attendance to promote conservation careers, connect job seekers with employers, and foster partnerships with regional conservation organizations and local educational institutions. Human Resources staff are currently in the process this fiscal year of selecting a consultant through a request for proposals and qualifications (RFPQ) process to assist with a review of the District’s classification structure, with the goal of identifying opportunities to develop or enhance career ladders/pathways. This work will also support succession planning and strengthen employee retention and engagement.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with conducting the annual public hearing required for compliance with Government Code section 3205.3. However, addressing recruitment and

retention issues may involve future budget and bargaining considerations, which will be presented to the Board of Directors as necessary.

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

None

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

To comply with AB2561, the District will return to the Board in 2027 prior to budget adoption with an update on vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts to keep the Board, staff, and public apprised of vacancy rates and recruitment efforts.

Responsible Department Head:

Stefan Jaskulak, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services

Candice Basnight, Human Resources Manager

Prepared by/Contact person:

Rebecca Wolfe, Human Resources Supervisor