



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-26-164  
Meeting 26-26  
October 28, 2026

## **AGENDA ITEM 9**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

Approval of Salary Adjustments and Classification and Compensation Plan for Board Appointee General Counsel

### **BOARD APPOINTEE EVALUATION COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a result of the Board of Director's (Board) evaluation of the performance of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District or Midpen) Board Appointees for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (FY26), the Board Appointee Evaluation Committee recommends the following compensation adjustments for the General Counsel for FY27: Adjust the General Counsel's base salary upward to \$366,028 plus a one-time merit pay bonus of \$14,641.

The Board Appointee Evaluation Committee recommends the adoption of a resolution approving the salary adjustments. The Board Appointee salary changes will be adopted through the Board approved Classification and Compensation Plan.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Board Appointee Evaluation (BAE) Committee was established to conduct the evaluation process for its Appointees. The BAE Committee was instructed to serve as the District's negotiator and met with the Board Appointees to discuss their performance and compensation. The Board has three appointees: the General Manager, the Controller, and the General Counsel.

The Board, working through the BAE Committee, implemented this process and completed this year's annual evaluation of the performance of the General Counsel, during the summer through fall of 2026.

The Board is very pleased with the General Counsel Hilary Stevenson's accomplishments and overall performance during FY26. The Board appreciates the General Counsel's continued dedication to protecting the District's interests and effectively managing and mitigating legal risk. Her ability to identify potential issues early, address matters before they escalate, and work toward practical resolution is an important contribution to the District. The Board recognizes and appreciates her thoughtful and proactive approach to legal risk management. The Board also values the depth of her technical knowledge and extensive experience working with special districts and public agencies. The General Counsel remains attentive to evolving legal requirements and developments affecting the District and appropriately draws upon a strong network of legal professionals and subject-matter experts when specialized expertise is needed. Her willingness to research issues, seek additional perspective, and identify practical solutions

provides the Board and organization with valuable legal guidance.

The Board recognizes the capacity she has developed within the General Counsel's office and appreciates the legal team's ability to manage a significant volume of complex legal matters. This includes the effective handling of numerous requests for information and other matters requiring substantial legal review, coordination, and responsiveness. The Board appreciates the General Counsel's efforts to develop her team and maintain an office capable of responding to the District's evolving legal needs.

The Board views the General Counsel as capable, knowledgeable, responsive, and composed. The board also acknowledges and appreciates her ability to maintain professionalism and appropriate decorum when navigating difficult or contentious matters and remain steady under pressure. Furthermore, her skills, responsiveness, and focus continue to be valued by the Board and organization.

The Board is very pleased with the General Counsel's continued leadership of the legal department and appreciates her commitment to providing sound legal counsel, managing risk, and supporting the District's mission and operations. The Board encourages her to continue building upon these strengths in the coming year.

The Board commends the General Counsel on excellent performance and outstanding work in FY26. Her performance standards, goals and timeline requirements were met or exceeded. The BAE Committee recommends an increase in the General Counsel's base salary as noted above after comparisons were made with the market and comparable agencies. Additionally, due to her outstanding performance in FY26, the BAE Committee recommends providing the General Counsel with a one-time merit bonus as noted above. Salary changes will be adopted through the Board approved Classification and Compensation Plan.

## **BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW**

The recommended performance review and salary adjustments were thoroughly reviewed by the Board Appointee Evaluation Committee, prior to review by the Board.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

For the General Counsel: Total of the annual salary plus one-time adjustment equals \$366,028, with a one-time merit pay bonus of \$14,641.

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

All public noticing requirements of the Brown Act have been met. No additional notice is necessary.

## **CEQA COMPLIANCE**

This item is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**NEXT STEPS**

If approved, the compensation adjustment and merit bonus will be implemented as set out in the Resolution attached.

Attachment:

1. Resolution Approving Salary Adjustment and Amended Employment Agreement for General Counsel

Submitted by: Board Appointee Evaluation Committee

Director Kersteen-Tucker

Director Holman

Director Riffle, Chair

Staff Contact:

Candice Basnight, Human Resources Manager

**RESOLUTION NO. 26-XX**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT APPROVING AN AMENDED CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN, A SALARY INCREASE AND A ONE-TIME MERIT PAY BONUS FOR THE DISTRICT'S GENERAL COUNSEL**

**WHEREAS**, effective July 11, 2018, the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District entered into a District General Counsel Employment Agreement ("Agreement") with Hilary Stevenson, employing her as the District's General Counsel; and

**WHEREAS**, the Agreement provides for an annual review of the General Counsel's performance and determination of meritorious pay, which the Board has completed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board is very pleased with the General Counsel's superior and outstanding performance for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 evaluation period. The General Counsel provided excellent legal advice especially during a very challenging year and kept the Board informed of all legal matters requiring attention. The General Counsel met or exceeded all the goals previously set for her during her last review; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board, based on its annual review of the General Counsel's performance, in recognition of her performance during Fiscal Year 2025-26, and to bring her compensation to the market and comparable agencies, desires to adjust the General Counsel's base salary upward to \$366,028, plus a one-time merit pay bonus of \$14,641;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District as follows:

1. The General Counsel's base salary shall be adjusted to \$366,028 retroactive to July 1, 2026, for Fiscal Year 2026-27.
2. The relevant portion of the District's Classification and Compensation Plan shall be amended to reflect the following:

| <b>Board Appointee Group Compensation</b> | <b>Hourly</b> | <b>Monthly</b> | <b>Annual</b> | <b>Effective</b> | <b>Last Revised</b> |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------|
| General Counsel                           | \$175.975     | \$30,502       | \$366,028     | 7/1/2026         | 10/28/2026          |

3. The Board grants the General Counsel a one-time merit pay bonus of \$14,641.

\* \* \* \* \*

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District on October 28, 2026, at a regular meeting thereof, by the following vote:

**AYES:**

**NOES:**

**ABSTAIN:**

**ABSENT:**

**ATTEST:**

**APPROVED:**

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Margaret MacNiven, Secretary  
Board of Directors

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Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, President  
Board of Directors

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

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Egan Hill, Assistant General Counsel

I, the District Clerk of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District by the above vote at a meeting thereof duly held and called on the above day.

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Maria Soria, District Clerk