

Unapproved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 January 25, 2016

ATTENDING: Kern, Beyaert, Coffey, Godfrey, Gregory, Ho, Mercurio, Palacios, Pellegrini, Rickard, Robinson, Sanwong, Simmons, Texeira, Thompson, Volin, Yee, Wilkins
 NOT ATTENDING: Best, Coomber, Madsen
 STAFF ATTENDING: Doyle, O'Connor, Pfuehler, Clay
 GUESTS: Director Doug Siden
 PUBLIC: Kelly Abreu

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of November 23, 2015 Minutes:** The November minutes were approved with edits. PAC member Gregory abstained due to being absent from the November meeting.
2. **Introductions:** PAC Chair Kern asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:** Director Doug Siden expressed his appreciation to the PAC for their hard work and great representation. He commented the PAC is operating on a high level with great members. He reminded PAC members about their opportunity to have periodic contact with their appointing authority and/or Board member.

Siden commented 2015 was a good year and the District is fortunate to have Robert Doyle as the General Manager.

Siden stated one of the key issues in 2016 for the Board is the decision about whether to place Measure CC renewal on the November ballot. Siden said Measure CC technically continues until 2020, so the Board must weigh what other measures will be on the 2016 ballot when making a decision.

Siden touched on controversies facing the District. The proposed new headquarters for Public Safety and new maintenance facilities on the Nike site at Lake Chabot has been opposed by citizens in the surrounding area. The project has been cancelled. The other controversial issue is the Chabot Gun Club also located at Lake Chabot.

Siden discussed some of his Ward's issues. In particular, the GSA property in the City of Alameda near Crown Beach. Siden discussed the history of the issue. The will of the people turned the tide in preventing the property from being developed.

Siden touched on Alameda Point and commented that Doyle is working with the Veterans' Administration about creating a park in conjunction with the VA's building of a facility for veterans.

Siden stated Contra Costa County has held a Creek and Watershed Symposium for several years. Siden explained he and Gregory are working with advocates to hold the first Alameda County Creek and Watershed Symposium in 2017. Their goal is to enlist Alameda County Supervisors to work alongside the advocates to help create and fund this symposium.

Siden paid tribute Sylvia McLaughlin, founder of Save the Bay who recently passed at age 98. Siden applauded the work she did to prevent San Francisco Bay from being filled.

PAC member Beyaert asked Siden, based on his experience with the issue of the GSA property at Crown Beach, if he has advice on how to resolve the issues with the Chabot Gun Club and Chabot Public Safety Modernization project.

PAC member Volin said his understanding is the lease has been extended until March 31 between the District and the Gun Club. He continued the Gun Club has been asked to submit paperwork to justify their claims. He added a final decision is scheduled to be made at the March 1 Board meeting. Volin inquired if the timetable for this decision is still on track. Doyle concurred the March 1 deadline is still in effect.

4. Public Comments:

Citizen Kelly Abreu from Fremont addressed the PAC about Mission Peak. The Board approved \$37,000 from the Operations Department to restrict parking on city streets.

Abreu touched on the construction at Mission Peak and how the plan is to shut down the main entrance to the park for six months. He asked the PAC to read the EIR document for Mission Peak. He stated another project at Lake Chabot has proposed keeping their entrance open while construction takes place. Perhaps there is a way to keep Mission Peak's main entrance open too.

Abreu commented Vargas Plateau, which was purchased in 1995 and promised to open to the public in 2015, is still not open. He requested information about the status of Vargas Plateau and when it will open.

5. Presentations:

(I) a. State of the District – Robert E. Doyle, General Manager

Doyle opened his presentation with a brief outline about 2015. He reported about the District's fiscal responsibility. The budget is balanced and has an AAA rating. He mentioned the District continues to recover from economic recession without any layoffs or furloughs. The District's budget is \$205 million with a \$103 million operating budget.

Doyle reported the radical change due to retirements is phenomenal. In 2016, there were 54 hired and 48 regular staff promoted. With 384 temporary or seasonal workers, the District now employees nearly 1,000 permanent and temporary employees. Of the new hires, 32% were minorities equaling a 157% increase. Of the promotions, 53% were females and 33% minorities, which better reflects the diversity of the Bay Area.

The District received 16 grants worth \$3 million. The Board of Directors approved an \$8 million dollar investment in zeroing out the District's carbon footprint from its facilities. The primary project is to develop a 1.2 Gigawatt solar facility at Shadow Cliffs.

Doyle reported 50% of land purchases/options were made with matching funds, primarily from the East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy.

The District completed two of the four current TIGER II funded regional trail projects – San Francisco Bay Trail at Hercules and East Bay Greenway Segment in Oakland.

Doyle reported about the Dumbarton Quarry project at Coyote Hills Regional Park. When complete, this project will have a new corporation yard for the entire District, a public campground and is adjacent to the largest wildlife refuge in California.

Doyle described the legislative advocacy work done in 2015. There was active work toward the transfer of 2,700 acres for a new regional park in Concord through a Federal Public Benefit Conveyance. Legislative advocacy also helped to secure the Senate Pro Tempore's key note appearance at the Bay Area Open Space Council's annual conference in Richmond.

Doyle touched on some of the Legal work accomplished in 2015. Legal resolved outstanding claims associated with the Redwood Canyon (formerly Willow Park) Golf Course. The District negotiated an updated MOU with Union Pacific Railroad for property rights and \$4.6 million toward shoreline access trail projects. Doyle continued the District has resolved issues with the U.S. allowing for the acquisition of the former GSA McKay Avenue property which will eventually expand and complete Crown Beach.

Doyle stated the difference between Crown Beach and the Chabot Modernization project is the citizens supported the District's position on the GSA property, while there has been no support from the public for the modernization project.

Doyle discussed the Stonebrae development stating the District has added five miles of trails and 1,000 acres of new parkland. This is a major extension of the Bay Area Ridge trail.

The Board Room and Finance Department have been redesigned and upgraded to modern standards.

Doyle continued discussing infrastructure improvements and pavement maintenance projects. The District is moving forward with a new public access bridge at Point Pinole from Atlas Road that will also bring utilities to the park.

2015 completed major paving projects include:

- Anthony Chabot Main Campground Entry at Marciel Road and Gun Range Road
- Tilden Nimitz Way, Lake Anza Road and Central Park Drive
- 5.2 miles of Contra Costa Canal Trail were crack sealed
- New seal coat and striping at Trudeau
- Redwood Canyon Golf Course parking lot
- Briones Bear Creek Staging Area
- Alameda County Trail

Doyle explained many of the District's turf areas have died due to the drought. The District has instituted a 20% voluntary water reduction and is looking at new types of drought tolerant grasses. The goal is to provide areas for the public to enjoy green spaces while also reducing water use. In some cases, the District provides the only green space opportunities for families who don't have any such space where they live. Water resources projects include irrigation

infrastructure improvements, and turf replacement projects in parks such as Contra Loma, Del Valle and Crown Beach. The District has received grants for turf rehabilitation projects.

Doyle reported the District is working hard with other agencies to promote physical activity. AGM of Public Affairs Carol Johnson and AGM of Operations Jim O'Connor have worked hard to create and implement these programs.

The District introduced the SHINE (Stay Healthy in Nature Everyday) program with Children's Hospital in Oakland. The program has brought over 300 families with chronically ill children to the parks. The Kids Healthy Outdoor Challenge grew by 52%, with 68 third grade teachers participating in the program.

Doyle was pleased to report for the sixth straight year there were zero drowning deaths under the watch of District lifeguards. In addition:

- 1,589 lifeguard swim lessons were taught.
- The Regional Parks Foundation donated life vests for swimmers to use for free. Over 37,000 were used.
- 683 youths participated in the Junior Lifeguard program.
- Police responded to 5708 incidents; and detectives collaborated with District Attorney's newly formed Cold Case Unit, solving a high profile case.
- Dispatch and field personnel handled over 7,260 calls for services.
- Additional cameras were installed at parking lots.

Measure CC funds have provided the District the capacity to make park improvements and conduct fuels management in Richmond, Oakland, Berkeley, Castro Valley, Alameda and Albany. A number of Measure CC projects have been less visible, such as underground utility upgrades at the Tilden Environmental Education Center.

Doyle commented volunteerism is important and the Board of Directors made it a priority in 2015.

The Regional Parks Foundation raised over \$1.7 million, continuing five years of sustained financial growth, funded over 5,000 youth camperships and Foundation memberships have increased by almost 9% for a total of 8,751.

Doyle touched briefly on the major transitions in the District. There are many new park supervisors and new unit managers. More training is being done including more outreach to staff. Doyle also commended the Board Members for their collegiate work.

PAC member Simmons asked about the Contra Costa County Watershed Symposium. He wondered if the District would consider sponsoring a half-day workshop to bring together Contra Costa County and Alameda County.

PAC member Godfrey thanked Doyle for the work the District is doing to decrease energy utilization. He wondered what the District's long term goals might be in this regard. Doyle replied the Shadow Cliffs project will provide enough solar energy to zero-out the District's electrical energy use. Doyle mentioned one underlying energy problem is District field staff often need trucks to drive over tough terrain. A more efficient solution needs to be found to

fossil fuel use. Godfrey pointed out the District could install plugin chargers in their parking lots to support electric vehicles. Doyle added the Foundation is looking at financing some.

Abreu (public attendee) asked about the delays in opening Vargas Plateau. Doyle responded the District was sued by the neighbors which has caused much of the delay. The park will be opening in the spring.

(I) b. 2016 Ballot Measures – Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager

Government Affairs Manager Erich Pfuehler discussed a possible park bond – the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Rivers and Coastal Protection Act of 2016 (SB 317) – authored by Senate Pro Tempore Kevin de Leon. Pfuehler explained the bond has four areas of emphasis:

- 1) Parks (\$1.45 billion)
- 2) Rivers, Lakes and Streams (\$370 million)
- 3) Coast and Ocean Protection (\$350 million)
- 4) Climate Resilience (\$280 million)

Pfuehler reported \$800 million of the Parks funding is for disadvantaged communities, mainly in Southern California. \$200 million is for per capita, \$200 million is for regional parks and \$300 million is for the Coastal Conservancy

PAC member Palacios asked about the process for the bond measure moving forward. Pfuehler explained it needs to pass both chambers of the legislature by 2/3rds and receive the Governor’s signature. To pass on the ballot, it will need a high Bay Area turnout as well as support from Southern California.

Pfuehler touched on the Water Supply Reliability and Drought Protection Act of 2016. He explained this is a \$4.895 billion statewide bond measure filed as an initiative on October 19, 2015. He said Gerald Meral of the Natural Heritage Institute is the lead proponent and needs over 365,000 signatures to appear on the ballot.

Pfuehler reported eight years ago the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA) was created to provide additional resources for the health of the Bay. The Authority’s board recently voted to create a \$12 parcel tax per year for the nine Bay area counties for twenty years. If the tax measure passes, it will raise \$25 million per year for local projects which will directly improve the Bay. The Authority voted to place this measure onto the June 2016 ballot.

The District has received significant money from the Contra Costa County Transportation Measure J. The County is considering augmenting Measure J by an additional ½ cent. The District is working on ensuring the expenditure plan includes an increase in trail development and maintenance funding.

Measure CC renewal will be considered at the Board Workshop. The renewal would be of the \$12 parcel tax per year for the shoreline communities from Richmond to the East Oakland/San Leandro border. The existing \$3.1 million per year in ongoing funding will expire in 2020.

Pfuehler outlined the BART “Fix it First” bond. He reported BART has been reaching out to the Contra Costa County Transportation Authority to see if their measure could fund train cars. The BART bond measure can fund train controls, communications systems, tracks and structures and station improvements. It cannot fund, however, “movable assets” such as train car replacement.

Another measure circulating on the ballot of interest to the District deals with marijuana cultivation. The most serious proposal circulating includes a 20% set-aside to restore watersheds and wildlife habitat damaged by marijuana cultivation. The measure would charge a 15% sales tax on purchasing marijuana and additional taxes on cultivating the flowers. It is estimated to generate hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Restoration funds would be administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife and Parks and Recreation. The lead proponent is Michael Sutton, former President of the California Fish and Game Commission and Vice President of the National Audubon Society.

Pfuehler touched on the Water Priorities Public Interest and Public Trust Constitutional Amendment which would redirect \$10.7 billion in unspent High Speed Rail Proposition 1A and Water Bond Proposition 1 monies. It would provide \$4.2 billion for new construction of surface water storage projects, including Sites and Temperance Flat Reservoirs. It includes \$900 million in revenue to increase existing storage, including Shasta Dam and San Luis Reservoir; \$2 billion in funding for new construction for groundwater storage facilities; \$2.2 billion for modernization of existing groundwater storage facilities; and \$1.7 billion in funding for future surface and groundwater projects. This initiative creates a nine-member State Water Storage and Groundwater Storage Facilities Authority within the Department of Water Resources. The initiative was submitted by George Runner, Vice Chair of the Board of Equalization and State Senator Bob Huff. As a constitutional amendment, it requires 590,000 signatures.

Pfuehler discussed Cap-and-Trade auction proceeds. Every three years the Department of Finance, California Air Resources Board and other agencies submit a three-year Investment Plan to the Legislature which will be included in the Governor's Budget proposal. Recent Cap-and-Trade actions have generated around \$2.7 billion in funds. The three-year Investment Plan is for the 40% of the proceeds which are considered discretionary funds. Pfuehler noted public comment to the agencies closed on November 13. The District submitted two comment letters and then Board President Whitney Dotson testified at a workshop.

Beyaert asked about the timing for these measures. Pfuehler replied for November most information has to be submitted to the Secretary of State by their mid-August print deadline. A scenario the District is watching closely is the possibility of an "omnibus infrastructure" bond which the Governor could support. If such a package moves forward, the District will be pushing strongly for park infrastructure funding to be included.

Kern inquired about polling. Do the pollsters mention anything about saturation, timing and voter appetite for measures. Pfuehler answered it will be hard for anyone not well financed to be heard because of the presidential election and all of the other items on ballot. Kern also asked about the reduced level of funding the transportation agencies are anticipating, specifically a recent article about MTC. Doyle said the article listed the projects to be cut. MTC is often good at moving monies around, but the recently approved funding for priority conservation areas could be at risk. Simmons said thought should be given about how to engage in this process.

(R) c. 2016 Work Plan – Bruce Kern, Chair and Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager
Kern reported he met with the Board of Directors and they were appreciative of the proposed PAC work plan. Kern commented in order to fulfill the items on the work plan, the PAC will need to work efficiently.

Kern listed the 2016 PAC Committee appointments:

- **Executive Committee members:**
Kern, Chair; Mercurio, Best, Simmons, Ho, Robinson, Wilkins
- **Plan Bay Area Committee members:**
Simmons, Chair; Palacios, Texeira, Thompson, Gregory, Madsen, Kern, Mercurio
- **Finance Committee members:**
Best, Chair; Mercurio, Rickard, Sanwong, Beyaert, Ho, Kern

The Executive Committee will meet prior to March 21 if the Gun Range concessionaire issue comes before the Board of Directors.

With regard to the annual field trip, Kern stated it was suggested the PAC members visit Vargas Plateau or Pleasanton Ridge. This would be early in the month of May. Kern suggested another potential site to visit could be Dumbarton Quarry. Beyaert mentioned he is unable to attend the December PAC dinner the second Monday of December. He would like different dates to be considered.

Kern stated he will meet with the District's Police Chief prior to the presentation about crime and safety in the parks and on the trails. He plans to discuss social media and communication issues.

PAC member Mercurio said the work plan is very ambitious, and the PAC members. Volin made a motion to approve and PAC member Wilkins seconded the motion. The work plan was unanimously approved by the PAC.

6. **PAC Member Comments:**

Beyaert reported about the "every kid in a park" Park 2016 event to get every 4th grader in Richmond to the Bay Trail and Rosie the Riveter WWII Homefront National Historic Park. Beyaert mentioned this program to get children outdoors is in partnership with UC Berkeley, National Park Service, Richmond Public schools and others. The Trails for Richmond Action Committee's 2016 report has been released.

Volin reported that the Chabot Gun Club Range Master stated at the beginning of the December 1st Board meeting that the Club had tested the waters in the streams leading out of the gun range flowing toward Lake Chabot, and no lead had been found in excess of the legal limits. Volin continued that Matt Graul, Chief of Stewardship spoke later in the same meeting and listed four issues that "compromised the integrity" of the gun club's lead measurement. The most significant of Graul's four issues was that the Gun Club had collected a large quantity of rainwater on the roof of one of its buildings and released it right before making its lead measurement referred to above. The Range Master made no effort to dispute Graul's assertions.

PAC member Rickard reported he heard the State of the District report twice.

Palacios attended the Alameda County Special District Association (ACSDA) meeting. She provided an overview to the ACSDA membership about the District's Campership program.

Simmons suggested the General Manager's update might be provided to the Mayor's Conferences every two to three years.

7. **Report from Chair**
Kern recapped the PAC committee assignments.
8. **Board Committee Reports** – None.
9. **Status of Recommendations** – None.
10. **Old Business** – None.
11. **New Business** – None.
12. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the November 26, 2015 minutes with edits.
2. The PAC approved their 2016 work plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay
Confidential Secretary